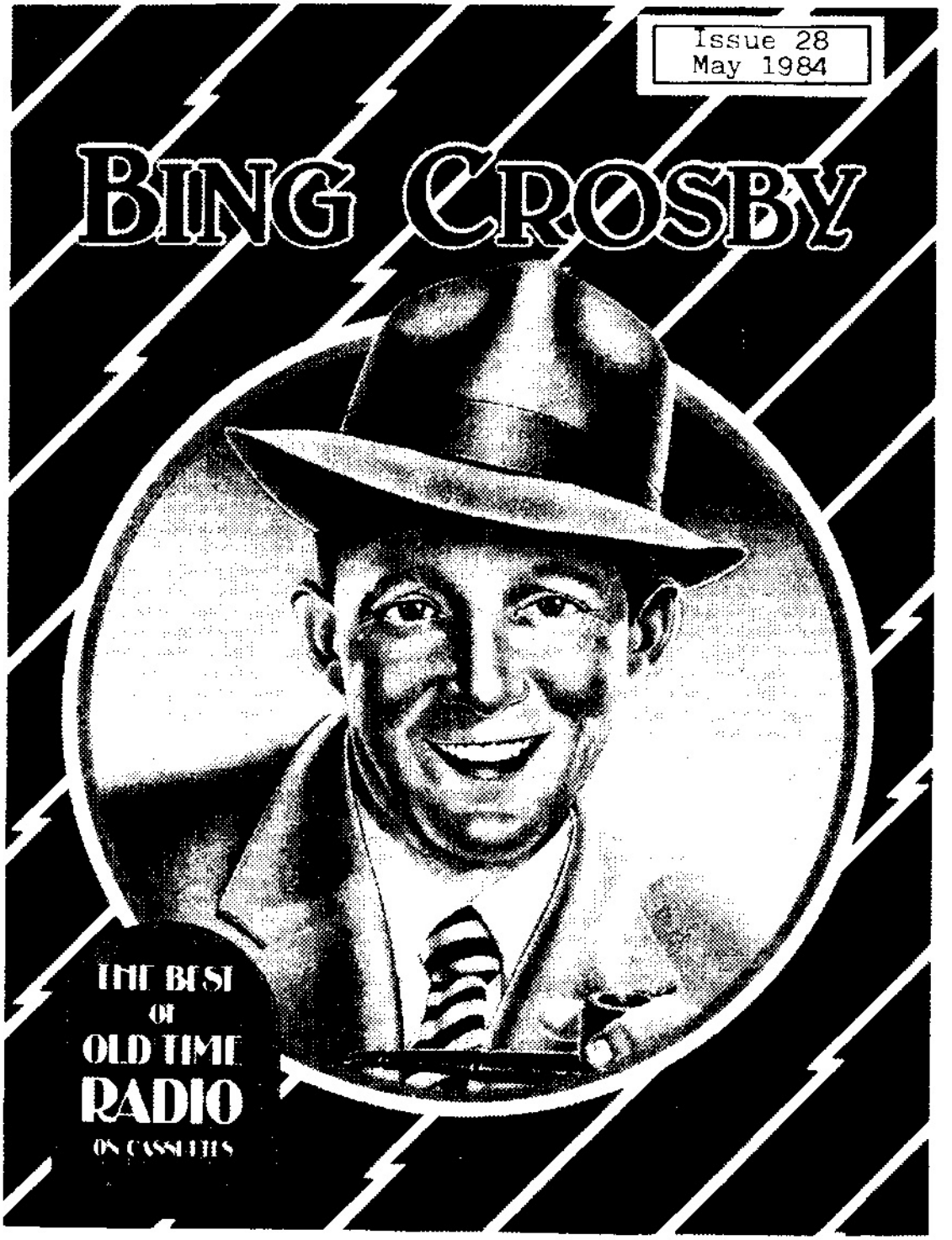
THE CROSBY VOICE



NEWSLETTER OF THE VICTORIAN BING CROSBY SOCIETY
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Hello again,

This looks like being our biggest-ever issue. It didn't start out that way in the planning stages, but so much material came in that it just grew and grew.

I'm glad you liked the 'theme' idea behind the last issue. We can't do this everytime, simply because of shortage of material. However, we will drop in another theme issue before the end of the year, most likely on Bing's Kraft Music Hall Broadcasts. Our good friend in Portland, Oregon, Vern Taylor, is busy chasing up material for this edition now, including original interview material with some of the original performers and production people. If you have anything at all on KMH that you can loan us, please do so.

The most important news in this issue is that the Victorian Bing Crosby Society, along with many other groups, will be forced to find a new venue for meetings from the end of the year. Mobil, like most petrol companies, has serious financial problems a $50 million loss last year being one of them , and can no longer afford to offer their theatrette as from December 31st. In fact, from July onwards, they are charging $175 a time to cover their costs. It would seem that all alternate venues also charge similiar prices so we will possibly stick with Mobil until Christmas, then find a new 'home'. Unfortunately, the cost of the hall will have to be added on to the cost of entry. I must say that we totally understand Mobil's position in this matter and we are grateful to the support they have shown us over the years. However, if you know of a suitable venue, with seating for over 100 with projection facilities

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The Victorian Bing Crosby Society, PO Box 422, South Melbourne, Victoria, Australia. 3205.

Executive Committee: President, Bob Machliss. Vice-President, Ken Orren. Treasurer, Keith Dorman. Secretary, Les Saynor.

General Committee: Bill Bennett, Josie Conway, Sylvia Harding, Jim McManus and George Styles.

USA rep: Richard Pearson, PO Box 1481, Arlington, Virginia, USA 22210.

(and projectionist), somewhere to have supper and close to town (in the city or along St Kilda Road would be ideal) - then please let us know as soon as possible!

Well, as I began earlier, this is our biggest issue, and with good reason. The cover was chosen to highlight some very exciting news about our cassette library and you can read about this on page 7. There's also news for members with video recorders too!

The records you ordered last issue have taken a while to get here. You'll find our why on page 9. There's also a lift out order form form more new issues in the centre pages.

On page 14 we have some more from Bob Schrader's scrapbooks, this time on the long gone Australian 'Bing and Swing' Club, including Bob's original membership card.

Our trading post begins on page 18, and we have hundreds of records available this issue. Also, on page 26 we have a very very rare collector's item up for grabs.

Bill Patey, freeland writer and musician has contributed an interesting article on 'Bing's Best Balladeers' - Burke and Van Heusen. See page 22 for the start.

On page 27, we have an article on Bert Newton's new Bing Crosby collection while on page 28 we reproduce a well-written article on Bing from a 1961 British magazine, Popular Hi-Fi. A couple of fascinating 'facts' are revealled in this article such as Bing appearing on a record by the Mound City Blues Blowers before"I've Got the Girl"! How true this is is debatable, certainly I've never heard the idea put forward before. There are also mentions of a couple of names still prominent in the Crosby world - Les Gaylor and Frank Murphy. There's even a picture of the young Frank on page 34.

There's a new biography on Paul Whiteman out in the USA and we have a copy. On pages 54 and 55 we feature a review of the book from a US paper and our 'From Out Of The Past' pages feature extracts Bing and Whiteman. On page 39, there's a 'new' 1929 photo of Bing, signed and addressed to pianist Roy Bargy and his wife.

And there's a heap more as well. But I won't take up any more of your time telling you about it. You may as well set to work reading it now! As always, we lead off with Future Functions.

****
FUTURE FUNCTIONS
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REMAINING DATES FOR THE YEAR: June 18, August 13, September 22, October 22, December 3. Please note these dates down now!

JUNE 18 - FILM EVENING - THE MACK SENNETT SHORTS

In 1931, Bing made six short (20 minute) films for slapstick king, Mack Sennett. Although the plots are nothing of consequence, the soundtracks feature some wonderful vocalizing by the young Bing - and for the most part, songs that he didn't record at the time. Over the years, we've shown edited (and often damaged) versions of these early movies - on June 18th we'll be showing five of the films in their complete form.
As support we have the early Walt Disney short "Who Killed Cock Robin" which features parodies of Bing and Mae West and also the later Disney feature "Legend of Sleep Hollow" to which Bing supplied the soundtrack.

This will be our last function at the Mobil Centre at the old prices, so don't miss out. $2 - members, $5 - member families, $1 - under-18's and pensioners. Non-members - $4.

Venue - the theatrette of the Mobil Building, 2 City Road, South Melbourne. Please try to be present at 7.00 as we start at 7.30!

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PAST FUNCTIONS
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FEBRUARY 13TH - FILM EVENING

1984 got off to a flying start when over 90 people attended our first movie evening of the year. Star attraction for the evening was Bing's 1934 feature - "She Loves Me Not" which stands out from other Crosby movies of the period in both plot line and acting.

We had a number of short films in support - but unfortunately, the advertised clips from "Whoopie" were unavailable at the last minute. However, this film is in Melbourne, and we will be showing the clips at a meeting later in the year. Once again, we managed to give away books and records to Marjorie DeRyk, Bernard Mullins, Pam Henson, Peggy Martin, Joe Stevens and Ron Were.

MARCH 25TH - CHICKEN BBQ

Sometimes in this life you can get very very lucky! The days leading up to March 25th had been fine and mild - ideal BBQ weather. However, on the Friday, the weather broke and it poured. Same for Saturday. When it looked as if Sunday would be no better, Wally Carson, Les and Jim went out and hired a tarpaulin to put over the back patio. Sunday dawned grey and miderable and up went the tarp. Then miracle of miracles, the rain cleared, the clouds broke up and the sun shone through! As late as 12 midday, a decision was taken to serve the food indoors, but gradually, people drifted outdoors, and by 1.00, the party was in full swing. Close to 70 turned up - a record for a Crosby BBQ and Bob Paull was kept busy with chicken and rolls and salads and dessert. Once again, the food was well up to the standard set by previous years, as were the antics of Jim McManus as he controlled the lucky wheel. Thanks to Jim, the BBQ ended in the black, instead of the red, as it could so easily have done. Jim and Wally did a magnificent job of collecting the prizes for the wheel - there was champagne, beer, jewellery, paintings (including one of Bing specially rendered for the club by Les Saynor) - and stacks more.

The club's sincere thanks go to Wally and Maureen Carson for once again letting us invade their privacy and for Les and Jim and everyone else who helped to make the day a success - not forgetting our doorman - Keith Doorman!

By the way, the rain returned Sunday night! Perhaps Bing was watching over us!!!

.....

APRIL 30th - FILM EVENING.

Apparently a lot of members didn't read their 'Future Functions' page too closely in the last issue. It stated very clearly that there would not be another newsletter out until after the April 30 meeting and to make a note of the date. As a result, only 40 members turned up for the meeting - which was a shame as we had a great programme. First half featured Bob Hope and Paulette Goddard in Hope's 1939 feature "The Ghost Breakers", while second half featured Bing and Bob in "Road to Utopia" . Door prizes were won by Les Saynor, Herbert Joyce, Len Giddins, Ted and Ada Paradissis, Marjorie DeRyk and Noel Lambden. Once again, Sylvia Harding brought along a large selection of nostalgia LP's from Ken Henderson's shop and these were available to members at special discount prices.

Bing is Back!

Yes, tonight at 10, the one and only Bing Crosby comes back to the air—for

PHILCO

with

Bob Hope

as his guest

Wednesday at 10 is "Philco Radio Time" starring

BING CROSBY

From now on Wednesday is the night to hear Bing sing . . . a new night, a new station, a new program. It's "Philco Radio Time," Bing's one and only radio show, with John Scott Trotter, his Chorus and Ochestra, the Charioteers, Lina Romay, Skitch Henderson and Bing himself with his songs and banter belored by millions. So make it a habit, now, listen every Wednesday to "Philco Radio Time"

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EXCITING ADDITIONS TO OUR CASSETTE LIBRARY AND OUR FIRST VIDEOCASSETTE!

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For the first time in several years, we have added to the clubs tape library there are no less than nineteen new audio cassettes and one videocassette - but what a cassette!

First things first. The page opposite shows an advertisement for the first of a radio series starring Bing that ran for three seasons, starting in 1946. Called "Philco Radio Time", these programmes are generally regarded by collector's as representing the peak years of Crosby on radio. Bing may have been in top voice during his Kraft broadcasts, but during his years with Philco - the programmes were also tops.

"Philco Radio Time" had a big budget enabling Bing to afford top writers and top guest stars - Bob Hope, Judy Garland, Al Jolson, Groucho Marx, Spike Jones, Burl Ives, Jack Benny - plus dozens more names you'll know.

There are 18 cassettes covering the first year of "Philco Radio Time" - 36 half-hour broadcasts in all. These are identified PRT 1 - 18 and the guests are as follows.

PRT 1 - Bob Hope, PRT 2 - Spike Jones, PRT 3 - Les Paul Trio, PRT 4 - Palph Mendez, PRT 5 - Ezio Pinza, PRT 6 - Burl Ives, PRT 7 - Judy Garland, PRT 8 - Jimmy Durante, PRT 9 - Jerry Colonna and Peggy Lee, PRT 10 - Peggy Lee, PRT 11 - Christmas Show PRT 12 - Joe Frisco, PRT 13 Mickey Rooney, PRT 14 - Al Jolson, PRT 15 - George Jessel, PRT 16 - Bob Hope & Dorothy Lamour, PRT 17 - Bea Lille, PRT 18 - Groucho Marx, PRT 19 - Judy Garland & William Frawley, PRT 20 - Andrews Sisters, PRT 21 - Al Jolson, PRT 22 - Peggy Lee, PRT 23 - Danny Kaye, PRT 24 - Jack Benny, PRT 25 - Al Jolson & John Charles Thomas, PRT 26 - Alec Templeton, PRT 27 - Jimmy Durante, PRT 28 - Burl Ives, PRT 29 - Groucho Marx, PRT 30 - Al Jolson, PRT 31 - Groucho Marx, PRT 32 - Maurice Chevalier, PRT 33 - Charles Magnante & Margaret O'Brien, PRT 34 - Fred Allen & Connee Boswell, PRT 35 - Ethel Merman and Alec Templeton, PRT 36 - Bob Hope and Jimmy Demaret.

And that's just the first year. I still have a few broadcasts to collect to complete years two and three, but if the demand warrents it, then we shall add the additional years to the library. Now turn the page and read what else we have to offer!

Cassette Library news cont...

COLLECTOR 1

Members with long memories will recall that back in the mid-1970's, yours truly presented a monthly radio show on Bing, "The Crosby Collector", firstly on 3ZZ Access Radio, and later on 3CR - thanks to the kindness of Neville Wragg. For some perverse reason, I kept tapes of these shows, and on listening back to some a few weeks back, I was struck by how awful they were! However, the awfulness was confined largely to my presentation; the Crosby content was quite listenable.

Although it is not and never will be my intention to inflict the membership with these shows via the cassette library, there was one particular show , originally broadcast October 15th, 1978 to commemorate the first anniversary of Bing's passing, that I thought might prove interesting. Via TV soundtracks, interviews, news broadcasts, recordings, etc, it traces Bing's last year. As there is a great deal of material supplied from all over by various friends, there are probably few members who possess it all, and so I've decided to put it on a cassette. The show seems to hold together quite well and is even a little moving in parts.

The whole show runs 1 hour and to fill out the other side of the cassette, I've included a broadcast from January 15th, 1977 tracing Bing and Bob Hope's partnership, from their first radio appearance together in 1939 to a mid-70's TV spot. Quite entertaining listening, all in all.

OUR FIRST VIDEOCASSETTE!

Because of cost, time, etc etc etc, we've never seriously considered introducing video cassettes to the club library. However, thanks to the considerable efforts of one member (who prefers to remain nameless), we now have a unique tape to offer to members with VHS machines. This tape features all the Crosby songs, edited from his feature movies from King of Jazz to East Side of Heaven. There's only one exception - Here Is My Heart - which is missing all over the world! The tape is fascinating viewing and listening - as you might imagine. The cost per borrow is $3 plus $2 for packing and postage - higher than usual because of the extra size and weight. Normal cassette library rules apply. Please use the standard borrowing form but ask for VIDEO 1. The good news is that the same member is working on two more 3 hour tapes which will cover all the songs up to Robin and the 7 Hoods. Applications will be dealt with by mail only!

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NEW RECORD RELEASES

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WHY YOUR RECORD ORDERS ARE TAKING SO LONG - AND AN APOLOGY

Dozens of readers took advantage of our record ordering offer in the February newsletter. As you may recall, the deadline for orders was March 2nd. Judging from the phone calls and letters I have received, quite a few of you are wondering why your records haven't turned up yet!

The simple answer is this. Once all the orders were in, it was necessary for me to write to each record company concerned to get a specific price for postage, packing and insurance before I could send off an order. Some of these companies did not get around to replying until the end of April!

It takes, in this age of jet age travel, some 8 - 10 weeks for a surface mail parcel to travel from overseas; then there is a further delay of 2 or 3 weeks while it passes through customs. So you can see that it can take up to a quarter of a year once payment has been received by the record companies before we actually have the records in our hands!

However, as you will have realized by now, if you ordered records in February, one and possibly two of the discs are here.(This is being typed in early May when only one of the LP's has arrived.) So, please, be patient. If you ordered discs, you will receive them eventually. This applies to the order form for the new records available, which you'll find in the centre of the magazine.

AND NOW FOR THE APOLOGY

When we put out the last order form, it was our understanding that the LP "Bing and Trudy Erwin" had been issued in the USA. It now transpires that this is not the case, and release of the record is still some months away.

This leaves us with three alternatives:
i) To refund the deposit
ii) To transfer the deposit to one of the new LP's available
iii) To hold over the deposit until such time as the disc is out.

To be honest, the second alternative is the most convenient for us. But we will do whatever you wish. The order form has all details.

Spokane 24

"Bing In The Thirties" – Volume 3

NEW

Side One

1. "Can I Forget You?" (Nov 18 1937)
2. "I Still Love To Kiss You Goodnight" (Nov 25 1937)
3. "When You Dream About Hawaii" (Nov 25 1937)
4. "If It's The Last Thing I Do" (Dec 2 1937)
5. "Once In A While" (Dec 2 1937)
6. "That Lonesome Road" (Dec 2 1937)
7. "Sweet Stranger" (Dec 16 1937)
8. "Swingin' Down The Lane" (Dec 16 1937)
9. "She's Tall, She's Tan, She's Terrific" (Dec 23 1937)
10. "Once In A While" (Dec 30 1937)

Side Two

1. "That Old Feeling" (Jan 6 1938)
2. "Remember Me" (Jan 6 1938)
3. "You're A Sweetheart" (Jan 6 1938)
4. "The Birth Of The Blues" (Jan 6 1938)
5. "This Is My Night To Dream" (Jan 13 1938)
6. "On The Sentimental Side" (Jan 20 1938)
7. "Pale Venetian Moon" (Jan 20 1938)
8. "You're A Sweetheart" (Jan 20 1938)
9. "Show Me The Way To Go Home" (Jsn 27 1938)
10. "You Took The Words Right Out Of My Mouth" (Jan 27 1938)
11. "Rosalie" (Jan 27 1938)

Spokane 25

"Bing In The Thirties" - Volume 4

Side One

1. "The Dipsey Doodle" (Feb 3 1938)
2. "On The Sentimental Side" (Feb 3 1938)
3. "On Moonlight Bay" (Feb 3 1938)
4. "I See Your Face Before Me" (Feb 3 1938)
5. "The Moon Of Manakoora" (Feb 3 1938)
6. "Gypsy Love Song" (Feb 10 1938)
7. "Thanks For The Memory" (Feb 10 1938)
8. "Gypsy In My Soul" (Feb 17 1938)
9. "You're A Sweetheart" (Feb 17 1938)
10. "My Heart Stood Still" (Feb 17 1938)
11. "Side By Side" (Feb 24 1938)

Side Two

1. "An Old Flame Never Dies" (Feb 24 1938)
2. "Sympathy" (Mar 10 1938)
3. "My Heart Is Taking Lessons" (Mar 10 1938)
4. "Down Where The Trade Winds Blow" (Mar 10 1938)
5. "Whistle While You Work" (Mar 17 1938)
6. "Let's Waltz For Old Time's Sake (Mar 17 1938)
7. "Gypsy In My Soul" (Mar 24 1938)
8. "I'd Love To Live In Loveland" (Mar 24 1938)
9. "I Simply Adore You" (Mar 24 1938)
10. "The Moon Of Manakoora" (Mar 24 1938)

Spokane 26

"Bing In The Thirties" - Volume 5

Side One

1. Ti-Pi-Ti-Pi-Tin" (Mar 31 1938)
2. On The Sentimental Side"
3. Mexicali Rose"/"Sweet As A Song" (Mar 31 1938)
4. Where The Blue Of The Night" (Mar 31 1938)
5. My Heart Is Taking Lessons" (Apr 7 1938)
6. I Can Dream Can't I?" (Apr 7 1938)
7. Don't Be That Way" (Apr 7 1938)
8. Hometown" (Apr28 1938)
9. Call Me Up Some Rainy Afternoon" (Apr 28 1938)
10. Love Walked Right In" (Apr 28 1938)

Side Two

1. "One Song" (May 6 1938)
2. Cuddle Up A Little Closer" (Jun 2 1938)
3. Little Lady Make Believe" (Jun 2 1938)
4. "You're An Education" (Jun 30 1938)
5. "Hello Hawaii How Are You" (Jun 30 1938)
6. Flat Foot Floogie" (Jun 30 1938)
7. "Lovelight In The Starlight" (Jun 30 1938)
8. Silver On The Sage" (Jun 30 1938)
9. "Someone Else May Be There" (Jul 21 1938)
10. "Naturally" (Jul 21 1938)

Spokane 24, 25 and 26 - "Bing in the 30's".

The above three new LP's are all produced by Larry Kiner, the man who will be issuing "Bing and Trudy Erwin". All three discs feature KMH material and all are recommended. You'll find each is included on the lift-out order form.

Neovox Cassette 911 -"Bing Crosby Early Years, Vol 2. 1931 - 32"

Here's a funny one. I presume it's a commercial issue but have no details. Songs are: Million dollar baby, I apologise, Sweet and lovely, Now that you're gone, Goodnight sweetheart, Dinah, Can't we talk it over, Snuggled on your shoulder, Starlight, Love you funny thing, Shine, Paradise, You're still in my heart, Sweet Georgia Brown, Waltzing in a dream, Lazy day, Let's try again, Some of these days. For further details, suggest you write to: VJM Records, 12 Slough Lane, Kingsbury, London NW9 8QL, England.

IT'S TIME YOU HEARD THE NEWS!

THE FINEST MAGAZINE DEVOTED TO THE INCOMPARABLE BING CROSBY

PRODUCED AND EDITED BY JOHN BASSETT FOR THE DISCERNING COLLECTOR AND ENTHUSIAST, AND PUBLISHED IN MARCH, JUNE, SEPTEMBER AND DECEMBER

ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTION:
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Please make all remittances payable (in English pounds and pence) to JOHN BASSETT and forward to "BINGVILLE", 15 OAST WAY, ROCHFORD, ESSEX, SS4 1RZ, ENGLAND

Around the Hall (Vol 2) - JGB 1003. Limited Club Edition.

This is the second in the series of KMH LP's to be issued in the UK. It is also one of the records you can order through our club. Contents: Tip-I-Tip-I-Tin, The umbrella man, The man with the mandolin, Angel in disguise, When you wore a tulip, Blue Orchids, In an old Dutch Garden, Love is all, I know that you know, Get out and get under, Says my heart, Honeysuckle Rose, Oh! You crazy moon, Tell me little Gypsy, Play fiddle play, Gypsy love song, You took the words right out of my heart, Garden of the moon.

Quality is excellent and all material comes from the years 1938 - 41.

Bing Sings 50 Pop standards - Japanese MCA - VIM 14,15 and 16.

This 3-LP set from Japan is one of several issues there commemorating the 50th anniversary of Decca records. Unfortunately, we are not importing copies from members on this one.

Contents: Stardust, The very thought of you, The touch of your lips, The way you look tonight, Too marvellous for words, The folks who live on the hill, Basin street blues, Swing low sweet chariot, Summertime, My melancholy baby, I cried for you, I surrender dear, When I lost you, A nightingale sang in Berkeley Square, Mandy is 2, Skylark, Blues in the night, Easter Parade, By the light of the silvery moon, It could happen to you, Night and day, Begin the beguine, Like someone in love, Out of this world, These foolish things, Just one of those things, Temptation, Baby won't you please come home, Give me the simple life, Sweet Lorraine, All through the day, Ol' man river, On the sunny side of the street, They say it's wonderful, Alexander's ragtime band, Embraceable you, Pretty baby, Golden Earrings, Love md or leave me, So in love, Autumn leaves, Then you've never been blue, Indian summer, Hush-a-bye, What a little moonlight can do, Ain't misbehaving, More than you know, Rain, Georgia on my mind.

That's a pretty amazing collection of tracks ranging from the mid-30's to the late 50's. Especially considering that several have never been re-issued on LP before. If this set is up to the standard of other Crosby LP's from Japan - both technically and in packaging, then you can be sure it will be excellent. Highly recommended for all collectors! Strange how Japan has become the leading country when it comes to re-issuing Bing's Decca material.

Bing and Swing

BY BRIAN HOWARD

Bing Crosby was born at Tacoma, Washington, on May 2, 1901 and is probably the only actor on the screen who never attempts to play any character but himself. He is as undisguisable as a Southern accent.

Ever since he played the title role in a high school production of Shakespeare's "Julius Caesar," and turned tragedy into comedy. Bing has demonstrated a most remarkable facility for spontaneity. With almost everybody else this habit would be well nigh fatal in the thespian art realm. But Bing's uncanny knacks for Binglike quotes or episodes at times normally considered inopportune, usually wind up paying handsome dividends.

When Bing died in "Julius Caesar," he unwittingly picked the worst spot on the stage to breathe his last, sinking to the floor directly beneath the heavy descending curtain. Without stopping to think what the audience reaction might be, Crosby just casually rolled over and got out of the way. For Bing that was the only natural and sensible thing to do. Although other actors would probably have stayed "dead," curtain or no curtain.

The stage manager tore his hair when he saw Crosby rolling around on the stage floor, but the audience roared and applauded Bing back for several bows

At all times visitors to the sets where Bing is working marvel at his ability to appear unconcerned, despite the constant hubub and confusion surrounding him.

Rehearsals, radio conferences, presentations, interviews are all taken in his stride. Nothing disturbs Crosby's tranquility and he appears anxious only to keep his life the way he likes it—simple and peaceful.

I think the reason he is internationally popular is that he knows how to make the people who hear him, happy and lighthearted.

* * *

Popular Sydney identities, and honorary Vice-presidents of the Bing and Swing Rugby League Football Club, who have been in the headlines in recent months, are jockey George Moore and wrestler Al Costello. George Moore, for whom we arranged a meeting with Bing Crosby when he was in America late last year, was married in June, and Al Costello, who is now the leading contender for the Australian heavyweight wrestling title, is making a big name for himself in South Africa, against leading matmen.

* * *

In reply to many requests here is a list of films Bing Crosby has appeared in, and the years they were made. His first work was a series of comedy shorts for Mack Sennett, then followed:

BIG BROADCAST	1932
COLLEGE HUMOUR	1933
TOO MUCH HARMONY	1933
GOING HOLLYWOOD	1933
WE'RE NOT DRESSING	1934
SHE LOVES ME NOT	1934
HERE IS MY HEART	1934
MISSISSIPPI	1935
BIG BROADCAST	1935
TWO FOR TO-NIGHT	1935
ANYTHING GOES	1935
RHYTHM ON THE RANGE	1936
PENNIES FROM HEAVEN	1936
WAIKIKI WEDDING	1936
DOUBLE OR NOTHING	1937
DOCTOR RHYTHM	1937
SING YOU SINNERS	1938
PARIS HONEYMOON	1938
EAST SIDE OF HEAVEN	1939
STARMAKER	1939
ROAD TO SINGAPORE	1939
IF I HAD MY WAY	1940
RHYTHM ON THE RIVER	1940
ROAD TO ZANZIBAR	1941
BIRTH OF THE BLUES	1941
HOLIDAY INN	1942
ROAD TO MOROCCO	1942
DIXIE	1942
STAR SPANGLED RHYTHM	1943
GOING MY WAY	1943
ROAD TO UTOPIA	1943
HERE COME THE WAVES	1944

DUFFY'S TAVERN	1945
BELLS OF ST. MARY'S	1945
BLUE SKIES	1945
WELCOME STRANGER	1947
VARIETY GIRL	1947
EMPEROR WALTZ	1948
ROAD TO RIO	1949
YANKEE IN KING ARTHUR'S COURT	1949

"Top of the Morning" was completed this year, but no Australian release date has been notified as yet, and at the present time Bing is working on "Riding High."

The Bing and Swing Revue Company has already played a big part in setting many club members of Australia's Bing and Swing Club on the way to successful radio and theatrical careers.

The Revue Company has two functions. Firstly, it offers valuable training to interested members, and secondly, it provides much-needed entertainment in hospitals and army camps.

Rehearsals under the supervision of the club's musical director are held every Saturday morning at the 2KY radio theatre in Sydney. Here members are taught voice production, microphone technique, stage presentations and the hundred and one things that go to make a successful artist.

When the beginner graduates, he becomes a member of one of the many concert parties The experience gained in this way gives the member final polish and confidence in his or her ability. Those who then desire are ready for auditions, which are arranged for them with radio stations, theatres and night-clubs. There is no charge for this service to club members, and to-day many former members of the Revue Company are steadily climbing to the top, and making names for themselves among the stars.

* * *

Director Frank Capra solved one of his worries when he found a horse to take the role of Broadway Bill in "Riding High," the film on which Bing Crosby is working at the moment.

Capra viewed several promising candidates for the prize animal role of the year before he selected Highland Dale, who is no novice to screen acting, having been trained for picture work, and made his debut in the title role of "Black Beauty," one of the world's best known horse stories.

* * *

Following on a gift of baseball bats by Bob Hope to several Australian baseball clubs in Australia last year, Bing Crosby was inundated with similar requests from this country. Bing asked me to check on the need of the bats and to let him know the position. The check was made, and the Bing and Swing Club made the necessary arrangements with the Government for an import licence. This was forwarded to Bing so that formalities could be completed for despatch of the bats from America. Bing purchased the bats in Louisville, Kentucky, and they have now been distributed by the Bing and Swing Club.

* * *

Then there is the Businessman Crosby . . . Crosby of the Crosby Investment Corp., Bing Crosby Enterprises and Bing Crosby Inc. These companies occupy their own three-storied building on Sunset Boulevarde, Hollywood, and are staffed as far as possible by members of Bing's family.

His older brother, Everett, is his business manager and supervises all Bing's interests, with the exception of his National League Baseball Club, the Pittsburgh Pirates, about whom Bob Hope once remarked: "They're so low in the competition table they'll end up paying dues to Mining Union Leader, John L. Lewis."

Bing's father, now 76, is a vice-president of all three companies.

Larry, another brother, is Bing's public relations man, while Bob, the youngest brother, is a bandleader in his own right, and also looks after Bing's talent agency.

The only brother not connected with the Crosby organisations is Ted, who is employed by a power company in Spokane, where the Crosby boys grew up.

Bing's sisters, Catherine and Mary Rose, once worked for Bing, but are now married and living in California.

Then, of course, there are Bing's films, radio shows, recordings, and two ranches a 10,000 acre cattle ranch near Elko, Nevada, and 30,000 acres at San Luis Gonzaga, California—all of which contribute largely to the great man's income.

THE END.

AUSTRALIA'S
BING AND SWING CLUB

Patron: BING CROSBY. *Director*: BRIAN HOWARD.

1. Australia's Bing and Swing Club is conducted under the patronage of Bing Crosby himself, who takes a personal interest in all its activities.
2. Membership of the Club is now over 6,000, the age range of members being mostly between eighteen and thirty years. In other words, the Club caters for all ages and is not a bobby-sox organisation.
3. Activities include many social events, which give members the opportunity of meeting and making new friends. Picnics, dances, harbour concert cruises, etc.
4. The Club has its own Revue Company, which presents charity and hospital entertainments. In conjunction with the Revue Company rehearsals are held every Saturday morning between 10 a.m. and 12 noon, and interested members are invited to attend for qualified instruction in microphone technique and stage presentation.
5. The Bing and Swing Club dramatic group offers those interested the opportunity of practical stage experience.
6. The Weekly Get-together of the Club is held every Sunday evening at 8 p.m. at Segars Ballrooms, 244 Pitt Street, with Tommy Quaver's Band, vocalists Jill Cullen-Ward and Ernie Duval, novelties, artists, prizes and a Talent Quest with a £10/0/0 cash prize.
7. For the benefit of interstate, overseas and other members interested, pen friends are available on written application.
8. During the winter months the Club has its own Rugby League Football Team playing in a competition, and other sports are arranged according to the seasons.
9. Full details of up-to-the-minute Club activities are broadcast in Brian Howard's Bing and Swing Sessions from 2KY every Sunday afternoon at 3.15 p.m. and every Monday evening at 9 p.m. Request Numbers and Calls will be given in these sessions for members on written application.
10. Many charitable organisations benefit as a result of the Club's activities.
11. To join the Club, apply in person to Station 2KY, or detach and forward application form below.

1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30
31	32	33	34	35	36
37	38	39	40	41	42
43	44	45	46	47	48
49	50	51	52	53	54

EXPIRES:

AUSTRALIA'S BING AND SWING CLUB

Membership and Identification Card

Patron:
BING CROSBY.
Director:
BRIAN HOWARD.

The Member whose specimen signature appears below, having agreed to abide by Club Rules and Regulations, whilst a Financial Member, is entitled to all Club Privileges.

SIGNATURE R E Schrader

- ***This Card must be produced on demand, and carried when attending functions.***

NAME ROBERT SCHRADER

No. 21,822

ISSUED 13/11/50

EXPIRES 13/11/51

★

All Inquiries:

BING AND SWING CLUB

Head Office:

2KY BROADCASTING STATION

424-8 George Street, Sydney

'Phone: BL 3661

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TRADING POST

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Quite a lot to get through in this latest Trading Post, including another huge list from Reg Andrews. Let's start out with the simple stuff!

Richard Pearson, PO Box 1481, Arlington, Virginia, USA 22210

WANTS: Holiday Inn (DL 4256) and (or the equivalents
Swinging On a Star (DL 4257) on foreign labels)

to complete his "Bing's Hollywood" set.

HE WILL TRADE: Any two titles below:

East Side of Heaven, The Road Begins, Only Forever, Blue Skies, But Beautiful, Sunshine Cake, Zing a little Zong, Anything Goes.

Richard writes: "All records are in very good condition. Assuming I do manage to two of the above for two of my wants, I will then have 6 LP's left over. I am willing to accept a bid of at least $10 American or Australian or £6.50 for any LP. As I want everyone to have a chance to bid, I will hold an auction for the discs towards the end of the year (closing Dec 31st). I do not want bids for all 8 records, just individual bids on each record please. Naturally, postage will be extra on top of your bids.

Chris Boccaccino, 2 Mane Crescent, E. Patchogue, N.Y. 11772, USA

HAS FOR TRADE OR SALE: Murray Hill 894637 - Bing and Friends - 4 records - new (US$15.00), Decca 8352 - Songs I wish I's sung - E+ condition - US$10.00, Decca 8575 - New Tricks - VG condition - US$8.00, Decca 8781 - That Christmas Feeling - N- condition - US$10.00, Decca 8846 - In a little Spanish Town - N- condition - US$10.00 Decca 9064 - Musical Autobiography 1934-41 - N- condition - US$10,00, MGM 3882 - Bing and Satch - N- condition - US$10.00, Warner Bros 1484 - I wish you a merry Xmas - N- condition - US$12.00, Capitol 2300 - That travellin' two beat - N- condition - US$10.00, K-Tel 951 - Live at the London Palladium - (2 LP) - N - US$20.00, RCA LSP 1854 - Fancy meeting you here - N- - US$10.00 RCA - 1473 Bing with a beat - N- US$10.00, United Artists 29888 - Fred Astaire and Bing - N- US$8.00, United Artists 554G - That's what life is all about - N - $8.00, Polydor 1-6128 - Seasons - N- $8.00, Soundtrack 104 - Blue Skies - N - $8.00.

Chris wants the following Frank Sinatra LP's, and would prefer to trade, rather than sell his LP's.

Philips - B-07605 - Sing and dance with Frank Sinatra, B-07759 - Voices of Christmas Vol 2, B-07759 - Day Dreams (with Doris Day), B-07914 - Fascinatin' Frank.
Columbia - 33-05-7536 - Frankie
Capitol - W20843 - Frank Sinatra sings select Harold Arlen.

Michael Reidy, 50 Brays Rd, Concord, NSW 2137

WANTS to buy videotapes of Bing material. Michael doesn't state whether he has VHS or Beta, but as he has just bought his machine, it is unlikely that he will have anything on tape to exchange. However, as we said, he is quite happy to BUY videotapes.

Reg Andrews, B16, Hunter Connection, 7 - 13 Hunter St, Sydney, 2000

HAS A LOT OF RECORDS FOR SALE.

First, the 78's, all in good condition - $2.00 each

Till the end of the world/South Rampart St Parade, Empty Saddles/ Roundup lullaby, Sweet Georgia Brown/Some of these days, Good Fellow Medley (?)/Jingle Bells, Love thy neighbour/Once in a blue moon, Please/Waltzing in a dream, Dream walking/Last roundup, I've got the world on a string/Young and healthy, Haunted heart/Bluebird singing in my heart, Let's spend evening at home/Home on range, After sundown/ Beautiful girl, Paradise/Let's try again, Temptation/May Hay while sun, Give me heart to sing to/Luv in bloom, Day you came along/Guess it had to be that way, I found a new baby/Who's sorry now, Far away places/ Tarra ta larra, Kokomo Ind/You do, Talk of the town/Atchison Topeka etc, Merry Oldsmobile/Medley of Gus Edwards, My baby said yes/A friend of yours, I'll remember April/Begin the beguine, I'd rather be me/Would You, 160 acres/Baby won't U please come home, Everybody step/Serenade to old fashioned girl, Sunny side of street/Does yr heart beat for me, Dinah/Shine, Dream walking/Last roundup, give me heart to sing to/ Luv in bloom, May I/Goodnight lovely little lady, When day is done/ Pale moon, Bluebird singing in my heart/Haunted heart, Wedding day/ Wedding samba, Londonderry air/Old man River, T 4 2/Ciribiribin. Marcheta/Lullaby, Blues in night/Moonlight cocktail, Prairieland lullaby/Dolores, Gorilla my dreams/If I had my way, Pass that peace pipe/Now is the hour, Sleigh bells in July/Like someone in love, Dinah/Shine, Goodnight lovely little lady/May I, Thanks/Black moonlight,

You're getting to be a rabbit with me/You've got me crying again, McNamara's band/Dear old Donnegal, Quicksilver/Have I told you lately, U keep coming back like song/Got captain working now, Sunshine cake/Horse told me, Red sails in sunset/Star dust, Xmas song/Kentucky babe, White Xmas/Start new year right, Lonely trail/ When bloom is on sage, Sierra Sue/Singing hills, Waiting for ships/ Blue of the night, Darling je vous aime beaucoup/Anniversary waltz, Down by old mill stream/Little sir echo, Sweet is word for U/Blue Hawaii, Young and healthy/I've got world on string, Once more the blue and white/Wouldn't it be funny, The whiffenpoof song/Ain't doing bad doing nothing, We'll gather lilacs/I still suits me, Happy Quince, Feudin Fighting etc/Who threw the overhauls, Out of this world/June comes round every year, I didn't slip/I cross my fingers, Nightingale sang in B. square/I only want a buddy, Open up your heart/Walk me by the river, Bluebird in my heart/ Haunted heart, Sweetly she sweeps my Alice fair/I dream of Jeannie, Got to sing torch song/Shadow waltz, Prairieland lullaby/Dolores, Connecticut/Love to live in loveland, Kiss in your pies/Strange music, More and more/All of my wife, Friendly mountains/Emperor waltz, Beautiful dreamer/Camptown races, Goodbye little darlin/ Be honest with me, My Isle of golden dreams/To you sweetheart aloha, Strange looking parasite/My lov my love, Lock stock & barrel/Home cooking, Angels of mercy/Miss you, Kiss to build a dream on (Satch)/ Gone fishing, You're the moment of a lifetime/Rinding down canyon, Everywhere U go/How it lies,Day after forever/Tooralooraloora, Sure thing/Someplace on anywhere Rd, Changing partners/Y'all come, What a little moonlight can do/Down by riverside, A friend of yours/ My baby said yes, Deep purple/Star dust, Mr Gallagher & Mr Shean/ It's been a long long time/Can't begin to tell U, Play a simple melody/Sams song, Oh what a beaut morning/People will say we're in love, Funny old hills/I have eyes, 3 caballeros/Don't fence me in, Aftersundown/Beaut girl, Be honest with me/Goodbye little darlin, I've got to pass your house/Cabin in pines, Walk me by river/ Open up your heart, It could happen to U/San Fernando Valley, Granada/Copacobana, Bells of St Marys/I'll take U home again Kath, Lily of laguna/Wait til the sun shines Nellie, Along the Santa Fe trail/Tumbling tumbleweeds, 3 caballeros/Don't fence me in, True Love/Well did you ever, Adeste Fidelis/Silent night, If you please/Sunday Monday or Always, When mother nater sings her lullaby/ Darling Nellie Grey, Just one more dance/Misery waltz, Don't ever be afraid to go home/2 shillelagh O'Sullivan, Symphony/Day by day,

Star dust/Deep purple, Mine/South America take it away, September song/I'll be home for Xmas, The happy Prince, Dolores/Prairieland lullaby.

And that's it for the 78's. YES I KNOW - I had a bit of fun with some of the titles, but you don't know how boring it gets sitting here typing these long lists!

Now for Reg's LP'S. These are priced at $7.00 each, and Reg says that all are in good condition. No label details were supplied.

Bing and Hoppy, Bing in the Hall, She loves me not, Bing and Al (Vols 2 and 3), A legendary performer, Songs I wish I'd sung, When Irish Eyes are smiling, Crosby Classics vol 2, Der Bingle Vol 3, Song of the islands, rare early recordings 1929-33, Bells of St Marys, Fancy meeting you here, Holiday Inn, Music hall highlights, Seaons, Shillelaghs and shamrocks, This is Bing Crosby - guest Rosemary C, The giants - Astaire-Crosby-Sinatra, Paul Whiteman Vol2, White Xmas and other favourires, At my time of life, Bing goes Latin, Bing sings the great country hits, Tribute to Bing & Friends Vol2, Bing with Ginger Rogers and Fred Astaire, Kraft Music Hall - April 16, 1942, Bing Crosby - sweethearts of song - Dorothy Lamour, Bing (Harry Lillis Crosby), Top hat white tie and golf shoes, Bing and Duke Ellington, Bing and Connie, Bing Crosby 1931 (1st broadcast), Il Grande del Jazz, Dinah SHore and Bing (1952), Golden Age of American radio, Wrap your troubles in dreams, Tribue to Bing & Friends Vol 1, Bing's redheads, THree giants, Bing's beaus, Big broadcast of 1932, B.C. Collection Vol 3, B.C. on the air, Distinctively Bing Vol 2, Bob Hope and Dorothy Lamour (19.1.47), Music Hall Highlights, Der Bingle, Big Broadcast 1935, Bing in the 1930's Vol 2, Where the blue of the night, Judy and Bing, Reader's Digest Set (better check price), Bing's party, Crosby and Mercer, Many happy returns, Nostalgic Hour of BC, Great Country hits, Birth of the blues, Bing and Armstrong, Distinctively Bing Vol 1, Holiday Inn, Garland, Sinatra nd Hope, Bing and Al Vol 4, BC and the Music maids, KMH broadcast 30.4.42, ditto March 12, Crosby Classics Vol 1, Bing in the 30's (Spokane 12), Pocketful of dreams, Crosby Classics (Rainbow), KMH - Spokane 11, Dinah Shore and BC, Sing you sinners, BC Collection, Bing and Andrews Sisters, Bing & Al Vol 1, Radio shows, KMH 24,12,42, Bing and Al (Vols 5 & 6), Easy to remember, BC Collection Vol 1, Old masters, 50th anniversary concert, Golden memories, Early Gold, Holiday Inn & Bells of St Marys, BC On Air (Spokane 1), Blue Skies (soundtrack), Best of Bing, BC Collection (Vol 2), Bing - Peter Lorre and Jack Buchanan, Boris Karloff & Victor Moore, Paul Whiteman & BC, Dick Powell and BC. END END END! Check Reg for posting and packing.

Johnny Burke

James Van Heusen

****
BING'S BEST BALLADEERS
****

The Movie Music of Burke and Van Heusen.

by Bill Patey - freelance writer and musician.

Most Bing Crosby buffs know that White Christmas was composed by Irving Berlin, but what of the scores of other Crosby hit songs featured in films? Who wrote them? Who, for instance, created the Academy Award-winning "Swinging on a Star"?

Throughout the creative arts, performers tend to outshine the people who write their material, and scant public recognition has been given to the various lyricists and composers who contributed so significantly to the Crosby success saga.

Notable among the forgotten originators of Bing's outstanding 'raw material' were Johnny Burke (words) and Jimmy Van Heusen (music). For 12 years from 1941, this gifted due produced more - and arguably better - songs for The Groaner than any other team which preceeded or followed them.

Johnny and Jimmy wrote more than 60 songs for 16 Crosby movie musicals, including five of the highly successful 'Road' pictures. The films were: Road to Zanzibar, Road to Morocco, Dixie, Going My Way, The Bells of St Mary's, Road to Utopia, Welcome Stranger, Road to Rio, Variety Girl, The Emperor Waltz, Top Of the Morning, A Connecticut Yankee in King Arthur's Court, Riding High, Mr Music, Road to Bali and Little Boy Lost.

Few would dispute that Bing's best songs came from his movies. The Burke/Van Heusen contributions included some of the finest ballads... like Moonlight Becomes You, It's Always You, But Beautiful, Welcome To My Dream, Once and For Always, As Long As I'm Dreaming, Sunday Monday or Always, and To See You. Most of these had long flowing melodic lines in the tradition of the old master, Jerome Kern - and lyrics that were often truly lyrical in the style of Oscar Hammerstein.

Other Burke and Van Heusen compositions for Crosby included Swinging on a Star, If You Please, Aren't you Glad You're You, The Day After Forever, Busy Doing Nothing, Sunshine Cake, Top of the Morning,

The Horse Told Me, You Don't Have to Know the Language and Personality. Their non-film songs included That Christmas Feeling.

Jimmy's tunes were 'always inventive and tasteful' in the words of musicologist-composer Alec Wilder who, in his definitive work 'American Popular Song', described Van Heusen as one of the 'twelve great craftsmen' of the 1900 - 1950 period. Wilder admired Jimmy's clever use of diminished chords and chromatic bass lines.

Johnny's lyrics were fresh, original and ideally tailored to the laid-back Crosby style. At times, his romantic ballads were almost poetic. He had a flair for 'fun' songs and duets, and often penned 'philosophical' numbers on the 'who needs money?' theme - like 'It's Anybody's Spring' and 'Aren't You Glad You're You' - both big money spinners incidentally.

One basic phrase Johnny never wrote - at Bing's request - was 'I love you' ! Bing preferred to sing indirectly of love, as in 'Moonlight Becomes You'..."If I say I love you..."

Bing's Chief Songwriters

Johnny and Jimmy became Bing's chief songwriters under contract to Paramount Pictures in 1941. In the previous five years, Johnny had already written lyrics for 45 songs in nine Crosby movies with other collaborators. They were: Jimmy Monaco (Doctor Rhythm, Sing You Sinners, The Star Maker, East Side of Heaven, Road to Singapore, If I had my Way and Rhythm on the River) and Arthur Johnson, who was both composer and lyricist (Pennies From Heaven and Double or Nothing).

Earlier again, other very talented teams had written movie songs for Bing. They included Johnson/Coslow, Robin/Rainger, Hart/Rogers, Gordon/Revel and Freed/Brown.

Burke/Van Heusen Beginnings

Johnny Burke was born in Antioch, California in 1908. While studying at the University of Wisconsin he played piano in the college orchestra. After graduation, he was hired by Irving Berlin's music publishing house in New York as a staff pianist. He was 25 when he wrote the lyrics to one of the biggest hit songs of 1933: 'Annie Doesn't Live Here Anymore'. Several more successes led to a Hollywood contract in the mid 1930's, when he was assigned more or less exclusively to Bing Crosby movies.

Jimmy Van Heusen wasborn Edward Chester Babcock in Syracuse, New York in 1913, and while still in high school entered showbiz by playing piano and singing on a local radio station. Later, at Syracuse University, he wrote college songs in collaboration with Harold Arlen's brother.

In 1936, Jimmy was hired as a pianist and staff songwriter by the Remick Publishing Company in New York's tin pan alley. In this period he teamed with lyricist Eddie de Lange to write 'Deep in a Dream' and 'Darn That Dream'. During the next few years, 11 songs with Van Heusen music (including 'Imagination') attained the national hit parade. These successes, coupled with the backing of Harold Arlen, took Jimmy to Hollywood in 1940.

The Burke/Van Heusen partnership dissolved in 1956 when Bing's 22 year contract with Paramount ended. Johnny wrote the lyrics for one more musical (The Vagabond King). In 1964 he died, aged 56.

Jimmy moved on to a 14-year collaboration with another noted and prolific lyricist, Sammy Cahn. They wrote some songs for Bing in 'Anything Goes' before The Groaner left Paramount, also the score for the 1959 Fox film 'Say One For Me' and songs for 'Road To Hong Kong' (United Artists) in 1962. Meanshile, they produced a number of fine songs for Frank Sinatra including 'All the Way' and 'Call me Irresponsible'.

Jimmy Van Heusen was one of the few Hollywood songwriters whose success continued through the decade of the Sixties, when he worked on almost two dozen film assignments.

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Footnote: As a restaurant pianist, I always play a bracket of Burke/Van Heusen songs from the Crosby repertoire - and it is jeartening that they are appreciated by people of all age groups.

Bill Patey

Bill has promised us further articles on Bing's other songwriters in future months.
Just a couple of other points on Burke and Van Huesen. Johnny Burke contributed no less than 118 songs to Bing's repertoire and Jimmy Van Heusen, 105. Incidentally Bob Hope played a character known as "Chester Babcock" in 1961's 'Road to Hong Kong' !

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MORE NEW RELEASES

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True Love/Well, Did You Evah? - 45 rpm single - Capitol (UK) CL315

A specially packaged edition of this Crosby million-seller appeared in the UK last November. Presented in a glossy, fold-open cover, it features a black and white shot of Bing and Grace Kelly while inside are spaces for the sender to fill in the spaces 'From' and 'To'.

True Love - 12" LP -Philips (Italy) 812 660-1

A package of 14 of the songs from 'Songs of a Lifetime' including the title duet featuring Bing and Rosemary Clooney.

White Christmas - 12" LP - MCA (UK) MCL 1777

A welcome re-issue for those who have been after this LP for some time. This is the 'original cast' LP of Bing's 1954 movie and has long been unobtainable, save for in Japan.

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TRADING POST - A REAL COLLECTOR'S ITEM UP FOR GRABS

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OWEN CORNELL - "I'M THROUGH WITH LOVE" - PANACHORD A11982

The above record is one of the rarest Crosby releases in the world. Recorded June 12, 1931, it was issued in this country on the Panachord label under the pseudonym 'Owen Cornell' at a time when Bing was hardly known here. In all the world, there are only a handful of known copies. (There is also an 'Owen Cornell' of 'I Found a Million Dollar Baby', also on Panachord and an 'Arthur Beaumont' of the same title on Embassy label. All are equally rare.)

The record is being offered by Sidney J Bromley, 30 Carawa & Camira Street, St Lucia 4067, Queensland, Australia.

How much should you bid? Well Sid writes that many years ago he turned down a bid of £27.00 for the disc. Although Sid has not put a closing date on his auction, I believe he will keep it open long enough for overseas members to put in a bid.

By the way, he describes the condition as 'surfacy' but 'plays reasonably well'. Sid also has a 16" AFRS transcription of a Crosby, Hope, Garland broadcast from June 21, 1945 for auction. Write for details

Home Beautiful, January, 1984

Bert Newton

Show this picture to a tribe of nomads roaming the Nullarbor and we bet they would say, "Ahh . . . that's Bert Newton."

Show the same photo to a drover in Woomdoo, a shopkeeper in Adelaide, a lifesaver on Bondi Beach, he would probably smile and say, "Yes . . . that's old Moonface."

Proving that Bert Newton has one of the most easily recognised faces in Australia. Bert, affectionately known to his fans as Bertie Boy, Moonface or Mr Nice Guy, is celebrating 26 years in television.

What does a man who has met everyone, been everywhere, done everything, claim as his most precious possession? A collection of Bing Crosby records.

There is a great sense of nostalgia in this choice, for Bing Crosby is a link with the past, part of Bert's earliest recollections.

The Crosby collection was a present. Recently, Bert had a birthday, not a very painful one but any birthday over 25 is *another* birthday. Philip Brady, a long-time friend, told Bert on the phone that he had a gift but it was too large to send. Could he come and pick it up?

Bert duly arrived to find Philip surrounded by a mountain of records, supposedly in the process of cataloguing them. He presented Bert with a large book entitled *Bing*. It gave a detailed summary of all the recordings Crosby had ever made and devotee Bert was first thrilled and then stunned — for the gift was not only the book but also the mountain of records in the room.

For six months Philip had scoured the secondhand shops putting together this amazing collection of more than 2000 records.

For a man who gets busier every year doing radio and television and hosting various shows, this collection is a form of relaxation and an on-going hobby, for as Bert says it will be necessary for him to live to 90 to complete it.

There are other items Bert admitted were more precious to both he and his wife Patti, but as a very public man they must remain very private.

BING

By Stanley R. White

THOUSANDS OF ARTICLES have been published dealing with the career and activities of Bing Crosby. It has been suggested that Bing is the most famous show business personality in the world, and that his voice has been heard by more people than the voice of any other person who ever lived. I am sure that such claims cannot be far short of the mark, when one considers the long career of Bing. I do know that he is the first gentleman of the recording industry, having sold more gramophone records than any other artist.

We will not concern ourselves with Bing's early days—before he had visited the recording studios. He made his first gramophone record in 1926, featured with a vocal group which recorded a number called "I've Got The Girl", accompanied by Don Clark and his Hotel Biltmore Orchestra; the date was October 18, 1926. The record was issued in this country on the Columbia label under the name of The Charleston Serenaders, the record number was E4310.

Although the above record is the first "official" record featuring Bing, it is highly probable that he did make some noise or other on an earlier record made by the Mound City Blue Blowers.

Shortly after recording "I've Got the Girl", Bing joined the ranks of the then famous Paul Whiteman orchestra. Whiteman used Bing with other vocalists to form a vocal group. His first record with the Whiteman band was "Wistful and Blue", recorded on December 22, 1926. Bing's very first solo record was made with Whiteman on March 7, 1927. The title was "Muddy Water", issued in this country on the HMV label A167. Bing remained with Whiteman long enough to make a brief appearance in the 1930 film, *"The King of Jazz"*, which was built around the popular Whiteman orchestra. Whilst with Whiteman,

Bing was included on several dozen of the band's records, sometimes as a solo voice, and often with the other members of the vocal group to which he belonged, the famous Paul Whiteman Rhythm Boys with Al Rinker and Harry Barris. After leaving Whiteman, Bing remained in California, on the other side of America from his home town of Spokane, Washington. He was actually born in Tacoma, Washington, on May 2, 1904, but the family moved to Spokane when Bing was still a boy. In California, Bing took a job with Gus Arnheim and his orchestra, appearing at the famous Coconut Grove.

With Arnheim, Bing continued to record, and on January 19, 1931, he waxed his first big selling record, a number called "I Surrender Dear". From this time on, he went from strength to strength through the medium of the film industry, radio and recordings. Anyone wishing to sample Bing's early days in recording without going to the trouble of sorting through piles of old records in a second hand dealer's, would find it worthwhile to purchase RCA RD-27075 "Young Bing Crosby", a twelve inch Long Playing record presenting recordings which Bing made with Paul Whiteman and Gus Arnheim. The records have been reprocessed with high quality equipment, and the reproduction obtainable from the LP is really astounding.

Having set the scene and launched Bing's career, we will leave the rest of the story, which must be common knowledge to most readers, to talk about other aspects of the mighty Mr. Crosby. Fan Clubs are not everyone's cup of tea, but Bing has had one going strong in America since the early 1930's. Today, the "Club Crosby" is run by Rena Albanesi of 128 Kimball Terrace, Yonkers 4, New York. The early days of the club are lost in the mists of time, and the founders are not now known. The club publishes a magazine called "Bingang", which recently reprinted an article from an edition of the magazine published in the early war years, written by a young club official who lost his life during the war. Bing has a very active club in this country calling themselves "The British Crosby Society". Heading this organisation is cinema manager, Frank Murphy, of 15 Grosvenor Gardens, High Howdon, Wallsend, Northumberland. This club publishes a bi-monthly magazine called "Crosby Post".

It is a rare occasion indeed when Bing's followers in the British Isles get the opportunity to meet him. But on his recent visit to these shores, it was possible for quite a number of them to meet and enjoy a little chat with him. One person to meet Bing for the first time on October 15, 1960, was Les Gaylor from the Isle of Wight, the greatest living authority on the tremendous recording career of Mr. Crosby. Les has every record which Bing has ever made commercially, and what is more, has collected information about nearly every one of the hundreds of recording sessions involved. It is possible for Mr. Gaylor to provide the recording dates for every Crosby record, plus how many "takes" were made before the final master record for commercial release was waxed, where the record was made, and the countries where it was released and the name of the record label involved. Bing is not unaware of the vast store of information which Les Gaylor has collected. For one thing, Les has corresponded with Bing for years in order to glean information from him; the name of Gaylor is also well known to all of the record companies handling Crosby records, and when Bing needs information about his past recordings—he knows an airmail letter to the Isle of Wight will do the trick. After meeting Mr. Gaylor, Bing commented to another person a few days later, "He's a great guy".

Bing Crosby receives hundreds of letters from his fans all over the world, and he reads each one, but replies to very few, for he would rather answer a few letters personally than have someone else do the job for him. It can be quite thrilling for the lucky few to find a letter in the morning post from Bing Crosby.

Like Mr. Gaylor from the Isle of Wight, there are many hundreds of serious collectors scattered all over the world, who try to obtain all Bing's records; there are also countless thousands of straightforward admirers of Bing, people who will probably never write a letter to him, or ever meet him, but who enjoy his films, records, radio and TV programmes. I expect many readers of this article will have a soft spot for old Bing. You might wonder what it is like to talk to him. I have talked to Bing and found it very easy. He has a good memory, regardless of his own views about this, and can give an answer to almost any question about his long career. He is aware of the fact that the person talking to him might be feeling a little uneasy, and he strikes up a warm and friendly conversation which soon brings your feet back to the ground.

I've no idea how many films Bing has appeared in, but I do know that he has made about 1,300 records. Therefore it is not surprising with such a long recording career behind him, that some strange things have happened regarding some of them. For the ledger, **over two hundred million** copies of Bing's records have been sold throughout the world to date. His microgroove releases in this country alone amount to no less than 70 Long Playing records and 40 Extended-Play discs, with new releases coming along all the time. Bing now owns his own record company, makes the records for this company first and sells them to the regular labels when completed. Look on the record sleeve of any recently released new Crosby recordings, and you will find "recorded by Project records", or similar wording. "Project" is the Crosby company.

When discs are made, several recordings are often made of the same number before it is felt by the artist and recording manager that the number is satisfactory for release. These different recordings are called "takes". Now sometimes, two or even more, of the "takes" are eventually released. This usually comes about when some more master pressing discs are required and an alternate master is selected for the job, sometimes by mistake, sometimes because second opinions have been expressed and it has been decided that the first choice for release was not after all the best. All this matters very little to the public as a whole, but the collector will be after these different "takes" in the hope of finding a word altered, or a change in the orchestral arrangement. The collector identifies these different masters by means of the "matrix" number", which supplies the information he requires. All records have these numbers, which are usually found scratched in the wax or vinylite under or near the record label. Some companies even print them on the label as well. The study of these matrix numbers can provide much information about where the record was made and whether it is a different recording from the original issue or not. The "master" record used might vary from country to country where the record is released. One Bing Crosby record collector living in Australia has gained such a knowledge of these "Matrix Numbers" through the study of Bing's records, that he has actually written a booklet on the subject.

In 1939, Bing recorded, "Wrap Your Troubles in Dreams". This was not his first stab at the number, for he had recorded an earlier version. However, this 1939 session is famous amongst the Crosby enthusiasts, because from it came a very unusual recording. The record in question is one of the "takes" which went wrong. That afternoon in the studio, the recording director signalled the orchestra to start playing, and Bing launched into the song. He reached the part where the song goes "Castles may Tumble, that's fate after all; life's really funny that way" . . . at this point the trouble began, for someone had been so entranced with Bing's singing that they had forgotten to inform him of a last minute change in the arrangement, resulting in Bing's voice heading down one lane, and the orchestra heading down another. Bing did not pause; he continued with the melody but changed the words to express his feelings at being caught out this way. The recording was put on one side, and eventually fell into the hands of the collectors who treasure a copy of it highly. The final published record from this session proved to be one of Bing's best known records for years.

Bing Crosby and Peggy [illegible] Taken during rehearsals for the recent TV show they did together

The collectors vary the hobby quite a lot. For those interested in the gramophone records which Bing has made, the point of the kick-off is 1926, with Bing's first disc (already mentioned). Obtaining an actual pressing of every Bing record can prove to be a very difficult and time-consuming task; many of the records are no longer available from the record companies, and have not been for many years. Because of this, whenever a collector comes across one of the more "difficult" discs—in a second hand dealers or from some other source, even if he has the record, he buys it on the spot, eventually swapping or selling it to a collector who does not own the record in question. Before I discuss one or two of the rarer Bing records which are actually commercial releases, it might be worth mentioning the methods used by collectors all over the world to keep in contact with each other, for this is an essential part of the hobby if every disc is to be obtained. Some collectors can keep in contact through the various club publications such as "Crosby Post" and "Bingang". Unfortunately, it is not always possible to find the discs required by sticking to club circles. Apart from people who collect Bing's records, there is a vast army of record collectors throughout the world whose interests cover virtually every field of recorded entertainment. These people will work together to obtain material for others in exchange for the stuff they require. An opera collector will often pick up an item by Crosby for a fellow collector, who will later return the service when he finds one of the rarer opera items.

Even so, a means of keeping in contact had to be devised, and it was left to collectors in the vintage jazz field to offer one of the best of all services in the form of a regular publication called "Vintage Jazz Mart". This magazine of around 50 pages per issue, lists the "wants" and "sales" of dozens of collectors in each issue. The contents are not confined to jazz, for the publisher realised that the more varied the collecting interests included in the publication, the more chance there was for these people to work on behalf of each other. Therefore the slogan of the magazine is: "The magazine that will Find or Sell any Type of Elusive Record". The system has worked, and the magazine now circulates in Australia, Belgium, Canada, Denmark, France, Germany, Holland, Norway, Sweden and U.S.A. plus other countries. Adverts covering "Jazz", "Hillbilly", "Musical Comedy", "Opera", "Celebrity", "Music Hall" and all other kinds of recordings appear in the publication, therefore it is not surprising to find that the Crosby collectors make good use of this excellent collectors' publication. Readers who require more information should write to "V.J.M.", 4 Hillcrest Gardens, Dollis Hill, London, N.W.2. If you mention this magazine, a free copy of a recent issue of "V.J.M." will be sent to you.

Many Bing enthusiasts throughout the Commonwealth have taken part on "Tape Crosby", a round-robin tape which is posted from collector to collector. Each person speaks for a given time on the tape, before passing it on to the next person on the enclosed list. Most of the tape space is taken up with discussions about the collecting hobby. In fact, some lively but friendly arguments have taken place before now. A recent contributor to the tape was Michael Holliday; he is a Crosby enthusiast who has taken the hobby further than most people, by following in Bing's footsteps and building a name for himself as a star vocalist in his own right. In 1959, Michael and his wife boarded a plane in London and flew to Hollywood to visit Bing. This trip was the subject of his recent contribution to the tape. Michael has a large collection of Bing's records at his home, and is typical of the many people from all walks of life who enjoy the collecting hobby.

One rare Crosby record was recorded in 1931. The title is "I Found You". On this number, Bing was accompanied by Helen Crawford playing the large Wurlitzer organ in the "Paramount" Theatre, New York. A small release of the record was made in America, but it never was released in the British Isles. With only a small number of pressings made in America, and all those years ago, it is understandable that the disc is a rare one. The story goes that the original master record used became damaged and the company "Brunswick" did not bother to re-make another. The interesting point about this record is the fact that in recent years, several copies of the record have fallen into the hands of collectors, not on the American "Brunswick" label but on the Japanese "Lucky" label.

A unique Crosby record owes its distinction to having the wrong name on the label. It is a 10-inch 78 r.p.m. disc of "After Sundown", backed by "Beautiful Girl", and is the same in every way as the normal Crosby record issued on the American "Brunswick" label. But the label on this disc contains no catalogue number, and the name of the singer is given as "Bill Williams". A couple of chaps at Brunswick decided to play a game on Jack Kapp, the boss of a record company. He was told that these fellows had discovered a singer who sounded just like Bing. To prove it they sent him the Crosby

record containing the false labels, giving the name of "Bill Williams". Kapp acted fast; he travelled from New York to Los Angeles as our friends had also told him that "Bill Williams" was willing to sign a contract with him. Upon arriving at the studio in Los Angeles, he learned the truth, that the audition record sent to him was nothing more than dubbings of Bing's voice with false labels. Jack Kapp, who founded the American "Decca" record company, kept the record in his personal collection until his death a few years ago, probably as a reminder that "some things really are too good to be true". The record is now in the hands of another collector; it is worth a considerable amount of money.

Some years ago, Bing's home was burnt to the ground by a sudden fire, and a personal collection of all his records was destroyed. Within a short time of this news being circulated, a collector had contacted Bing and offered him a complete collection of his recordings, to replace those lost in the fire. Being refused on the grounds that he had a further collection elsewhere, but marvelled at the loyalty of his collector friends in making this offer, for a complete collection of his original discs is worth hundreds of pounds today. There are several such collections in England alone. When Bing was in London recently, and Les Gaylor told him of the extent of the collecting hobby today, Bing commented "I'm sure glad I made all of those records".

It is unlikely that you could write to Bing and ask him to send you a copy or copies of his records, and get them, but there are exceptions. Here is a notable instance. An enthusiast living in Moscow, wrote to Bing explaining that it was extremely difficult to get hold of any of his recent records in Russia. Now Bing was unaware that he had any followers in the Soviet Union and decided that this letter was unique. Our Russian friend received a pleasant surprise one day when a parcel arrived at his Moscow home from Bing in Hollywood

Mr. V. A. Repnikov. The Russian enthusiast who received a parcel of records from Bing Crosby.

Enclosed in the parcel was a letter from Bing, an autographed photo plus several of Bing's recent Long-Playing records. All had arrived safely apart from the one 78 speed record in the package, which was broken. The Russian explained that they only have the 33 speed and 78 r.p.m., although he had altered his own equipment himself, to play the 45 r.p.m. records which other collectors had sent him. A very nice gesture on Bing's part.

The collectors do not keep all the information they collect to themselves. In 1958, the "British Crosby Society" issued a duplicated magazine called "The Long-Play Mr. Crosby" listing all of Bing's LP and EP records released in the British Isles. This included everything from the advent of the microgroove records to November of that Year. A supplement to this is now available listing from November 1958 to late 1960. The publications are very thorough, containing recording dates, full titles and accompaniment. Anyone can buy these publications from the society. Collectors have also available amongst themselves, the complete Bing Crosby discography. This has taken many years to compile and if ever published, will make a sizeable book

Enthusiasm for Bing ranges through all walks of life, and amongst people of all age groups. Listed amongst the well known collectors are many personalities; Ken Sykora, well-known guitar player and broadcasting star is one Crosby expert. Ken includes a regular "Crosby Cameo" in his B.B.C. programme, "Round-about".

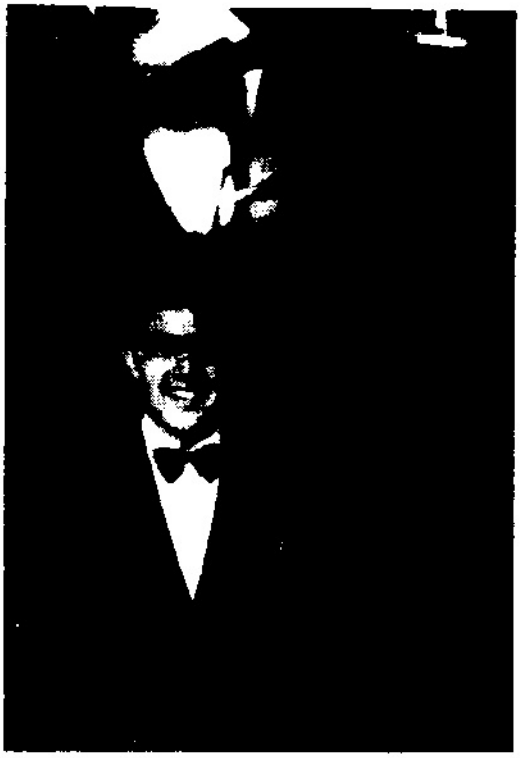
When Reginald Dixon, the famous Blackpool organist had to undergo a tricky operation on his arm a couple of years ago, one of his many "get well soon" letters came from Bing Crosby.

The B.B.C. have included the record programme, "Bing Sings" in their radio programmes at regular intervals for many years.

The Crosby followers stop at nothing to obtain unusual items connected with Bing. Frank Murphy, head of the Crosby Society is the proud owner of a set of special car number plates manufactured especially for the annual Bing Crosby Golf Tournament held in California. The plates contain a sketch of Bing, together with the dates of the tournament. Others collect photographs of Bing, whilst many scrapbooks have been filled with cuttings about Bing taken from magazines and newspapers.

Bing has made a steady stream of films since 1930. His first star role was in "*The Big Broadcast of* 1932". His fans cannot wait for the new films to come along, or the old ones to be re-issued., and to fill in the gaps, many have built up their own private library of his films, together with equipment to show them. Several people in this country own two-reeler films featuring Bing, which he made for Mack Sennett in 1931. Another popular angle for the enthusiasts is to collect unusual recordings featuring Bing. These consist of material taken from Radio and TV shows in America; records of Bing made privately; special discs made for the forces during the war; advertising discs sold with various branded goods in America, plus any other odd recordings featuring Bing which can be found.

During the war years, Bing made several appearances at the famous "Stagedoor Canteen" in London. He also recorded



Frank Murphy, Cinema manager and Active President of 'The British Crosby Society'. Frank drives around Newcastle in a van with special number plates made for the Bing Crosby Golf Tournament earlier this year in California.

some radio programmes at the war-time studios in Bedford as a guest of Major Glenn Miller and the A.E.F. band. In recent years the collectors have been trying to locate the transcriptions of these programmes, because Bing himself is interested in obtaining them. The official view of the B.B.C. is that they no longer exist, that they were destroyed "as of no further interest". Bing says he is loath to believe that they are not lying around somewhere. Collectors engaged in this search for the material feel that even if the original transcriptions have gone, someone may have taken down private recordings of the songs from the radio broadcasts. Bing wants the recordings as a reminder of his friendship with Glenn Miller. Bing never recorded with the Miller band, although they did make a record together called "Someone Stole Gabriel's Horn". Glenn had written the arrangements for this, but was then only a trombone player in the orchestra backing Bing. Bing, reminded of this record through his correspondence with collectors over the Bedford sessions, played it in one of his radio programmes in 1956. In searching for the Glenn Miller transcriptions, two other recordings which Bing had made with Glenn in London in 1944 came to light. A collector contacted the people who were searching for the transcriptions and told them he had two songs sung by Bing with Miller. It turned out that the recordings were privately made at the "Stagedoor Canteen". The titles of the songs featured were "Why Don't You Fall In Love With Me", with the dance band section of the band, and "I'll Be Seeing You", with the full American Expeditionary Forces Orchestra. The records were sent to Bing who wrote back and said "Thank you for a grand souvenir".

On October 15, 1960, Bing recorded for numbers for his own "Project" label at Decca's West Hampstead Studios, London. These are believed to be Bing's first commercial records to be made in England. The songs will eventually appear in a Long Playing Album to be released on the "London" label. Other future releases include "How The West Was Won"—two Long Playing records about the history of the Western States of America, featuring Bing and other artists. The records will appear on the RCA label in the spring of 1961. Bing is also recording another of his "Sing Along with Bing" albums shortly, and a new LP featuring him in duets with Louis "Satchmo" Armstrong is also due for release.

On his recent visit to London, Bing told several people that he would be back in England in 1961, together with Bob Hope to make a film called "The Road to Hong Kong"?

While in London, Bing received a constant stream of visitors, many from the ranks of the collectors, and names he has known for years through their letters to him. Bing did his best to see each one of them, and from comments gathered afterwards it seems pretty certain that the "Old Groaner" was enjoying the experience in his own casual way.

With the score at over two hundred million, I imagine that in the world of gramophone records, "Bing is the Daddy of Them All".

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LETTERBOX

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From Ken Henderson, Bentleigh

In the last issue, Girvan Paterson asks about Universal Pictures and their archives with special reference to 'King of Jazz'. The print to which the club has access came from London via the USA which was noted from the lab marks on the side of the film. It was assumed that this came from the BBC 35mm print which had been screened in that city and nowhere else.

It seemed that the print was far from complete and comparison with the original sound disc which the ABC has in Sydney confirmed this. Around 1970, the defunct USA magazine, Film Fan Monthly, edited by Leonard Maltin made reference to the finding of two prints of the film, location not given. One print had a sound strip and the other was for the addition of the 16" sound discs. Nothing more was heard of this discovery. At the time, they also made reference to a cinema Christmas screening of 'Whoopie' using a colour print, but this apparently did not take place.

Universal during the 1930's was in poor shape after being the oldest surviving film company and through mergers, today still holds this honour. It was only Deanna Durbin who helped them regain some of their past glory in the late 30's. In the 1950's, Univeral bought the negatives of many pre-1948 Paramount films, and to make room for these, they are said to have destroyed the negatives and prints of all the remaining silent footage they still had plus a lot of other material. Later on, they gave away about 20,000,000 feet of film (all outtakes) from 'All Quiet on the Western Front' (1930) to the American Film Institute.

Like the AFI, Universal is now trying to reclaim copies of these old films but it may well be too late. At one time during the early days of TV, they gave away the rights to their horror films to Screen Gems TV (Columbia Pictures) but I believe that these rights have now reverted to Universal. The other problem of course in the preservation of early films, besides natural deterioration, is employee theft which has been high in some companies.

From Ian Burnham, Thornbury

Though I'm a relative 'youngster' at 34, I've been a Crosby fan since childhood. My first encounter with his magic was via the 'Road'

pictures on TV. When I began my working career, LP reissues of his old records were amongst the first LP's that I purchased. If I had to choose the first Crosby record to make a big impression on me, I think I'd choose 'Million Dollar Baby'. I've never heard any other singer come close to his rendition.

Reading Bob's comment in the magazine about literature on Bing 'good or bad' serving to keep his name before the public, I must say that I think that the 'bad' lends a negative fame that only appeals to the discontents who enjoy pushing celebrites off imaginary pedestals. Perhaps Bing may have had a 'dark' side, but during his lifetime, no-one was game to challenge him over it. And afterall, we are mainly interested in Crosby the performer and not what someone perceives as the private man.

From Frans van der Kolff, Amsterdam.

I would like to congratulate you on the new editorial policy of 'theme' issues. I liked the last issue very much - and that from someone who doesn't like golf. I guess it gives an opportunity, not only to discuss more 'in depth' on aspects of Bing's career, but also to reprint old articles, views, etc in a context, not just as old material to fill up blank space.

From Brian Lewis, London

As a keen golfer, the latest 'Voice' is going to be of even more pleasure, particularly as I've played on a number of the courses mentioned - the awesome 16th at Cyprus Point and the 17th on the Old at St Andrews where I play once a month. After a wait of three years I should be a member of the Royal Ancient next month - the club to whom Bing presented a lovely silver trophy, which with others, is on permanent display in the Trophy Room.

From Girvan Paterson, Oakleigh

After reading in the last 'Crosby Voice' that Phonogram Records (Polygram) had taken over the MCA catalogue, I wrote to them asking if they could release some of Bing's albums, as none were currently available in this country. I then received a reply from Polygram stating that as of June 1st, 1984, they will lose the rights to the MCA label, which will then go to WEA Records.

Polygram stated that once they lose the rights, they will not release or restock the product. So it seems that no Bing Crosby Decca recordings will be available for some time. It's a great shame to

see Bing's great Decca recording catalogue reduced to the more obscure record labels. What a pity RCA or Capitol or one of the other 'Giants' represented in this country wouldn't take over the Decca catalogue and so something with it.

(Interestingly Girvan, I received a call from one of our NSW members a few weeks after the last edition of the Crosby Voice came out, telling that there were in fact a number of the MCA issues available in that state on the Rainbow label. Since then, I have found a few cassette issues on Rainbow filtering into the shops here. Who knows what WEA will do when they take over the catalogue! BM)

From Bob Lundberg, Tacoma

My wife Joyce and I are in charge of this year's Tribute to Bing, to be held on May 4th and 5th. We have good programmes lined up. On Staurday night, we have a Broadway type review - singing and dancing. Sunday night we have a choir in a Salute to Bing, a comedy sketch, and a band to give a Dixieland Jazz concert.

We have also arranged an auction that we think is different and entertaining. We wrote to different people and received replies from most of them. Former President Richard Nixon graciously sent an autographed book, his 'The Real War'. Former president Gerald Ford sent a beautiful picture of himself autographed 'To a friend of The Bing Crosby Historical Society', and also a tie bar with his name engraved and containing the presidential seal. From Arnold Palmer we have two cans of Pennzoil with his personal autograph.

From Richard Pearson, Arlington

There's a new book on Bob Crosby out called 'Stomp Off, Let's Go - the Story of Bob Crosby's Bob Cats and Big Band' by John Chiltern. 284 pages with photos, £6.75, published by Jazz Book Service, PO Box 278, London WC1N 3RD, U.K. American members may obtain the book for $12.00 plus $1.50 postage, from Oak Lawn Books, Box 2663, Providence, R.I. 02907.

From Graham Pascoe, Bathurst

Last Sunday afternoon, I was watching Bob Hope and Dorothy Lamour in 'They Got Me Covered' on Orange station CBN 8. I was amused when, in a hotel scene, Bob opened a cigarette box and Bing's voice crooned 'Where the blue of the night ba ba ba boo' and Hope quipped something like 'That guy keeps haunting me! ' Incidentally, Channel 8 showed 'Dixie' last Wednesday afternoon, so I just 'happened' to be at home at that time!

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BITS 'N' PIECES

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* I don't know whether all states in Australia (or for that matter in the USA and the UK) ran the '35 years of television' tribute earlier in the year, but right at the end, when Bob Hope came on, he featured a special segment on Bing. From memory, this was the longest segment in the whole programme.

* Last issue we featured the label from 'Who Killed Cock Robin' 78 in our Collector's Corner. The other week, channel 7 featured this cartoon on their Walt Disney show. Fine vintage Disney from the mid-30's and a clever parody of Bing and Mae West.

* 'The Crosby Voice' has gone on show in Budapest, Hungary! True! Some months back, our U.S. rep Richard Pearson received a letter from the United States Information Centre requesting the loan of material for an exhibition on 'Filmmaking in America'. The letter stated that"the purpose of the exhibition is to show the role of Hollywood in America's life, and the important contributions European immigrants and artists have made to the development of the American film. It will also show how American audiences, through their fan mail and support, have shaped what started out to be merely commercial formula films, into something much more significant - a new American folklore".

The letter then goes on to request examples of such material as club membership cards, newsletters, badges, etc. Richard happily obliged with examples of this magazine.

So far we haven't received any applications for membership from behind the iron curtain, but you never know!

* Sad to note the passing in recent times of several people associated with Bing in one way or another. Ethel Merman who appeared in two of Bing's early films 'We're Not Dressing' and 'Anything Goes' as well as on his later radio shows. William Demarest who was associated with Bing at the Del Mar Race track and who almost certainly appeared on Bing's broadcasts. Count Basie, who combined with Bing for a 1972 album 'Bing and Basie'.

* Two notable birthdays in May for people closely connected with Bing are Fred Astaire (85) and Irving Berlin (96)!

A rare 1929 photo of Bing - taken from the new book "Pops - Paul Whiteman, King of Jazz." See page 54.

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MORE BITS 'N' PIECES

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* Al Jolson Discography published! Larry Kiner of Spokane Records fame, recently published a hard-cover discography on Al Jolson. It covers Jolson's recording dates, locations, titles, songwriters, accompaniment, record size, speed, labels, etc. Indexes to songs, LP albums, single records, conductors, co-stars, motion pictures and radio series are also provided. The entire book runs to some 200 pages and includes an introduction by Melbourne's best known Jolson enthusiast, Peter Tatchell. Cost is $29.95 (US) plus $1 postage within the USA and $4 elsewhere. Please send payment to: The Redmond Nostalgia Company, PO Box 82, Dept N3, Redmond, WA 98052-0082. This Jolson item is included because I known that a number of our members are interested in the artist and also because we are having another joint function with the Jolson Society this Auguest 13th. This information was confirmed too late for inclusion in our future functions pages, but is now official. Films to be screened will be Jolson's 1930 "Big Boy" and Bing's 1932 "Big Broadcast". Further details will be published in our next newsletter.

* Last Mother's Day found yours truly doing something he had never done before! Spinning records (Crosby of course) for lunchtime diners at Kirkpatrick's Hotel in Mornington. I don't know how they got onto us, but several weeks earlier I received a call from one of the organizations who arranges hotel entertainment - more often than not, bands and singers. However, it seems that Kirkpatrick's had heard of us, and were interested to have a Crosby afternoon to celebrate Mother's Day. So I fronted up with a box of LP's and pretended (very badly) to be a DJ for three hours. Part of the time I played my choices, the rest of the time, requests from the audience. Interestingly, requests for Bing's Irish records outnumbered all others 2 to 1 ! Still and all, it was an interesting experience and really quite painless.

* A professional freelance photographer in the USA, one Nancy Barr, has decided to retire. As a result, she is selling up her collection and I believe that she may have a number of candid Crosby photos. She has colour prints, colour negatives, colour slides etc for sale and her prices seem quite reasonable. Write for details if you are interested. Nancy Barr, 3625 Lockford Ct, Thousand Oaks, Cal. 91390. And don't forget our friend Frank Murphy in the UK with his Photoclub!

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AND MORE LETTERS

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From Sheldon O'Connell, Canada

Many thanks for forwarding the Bing Book of Verse. It's a beautiful piece of work and most original. Apart from being an attractive addition to anyone's library, the deft way in which poet Ted Paradissis has interwoven the characters Bing protrayed in six of his films, is a special joy.

It's curious, but I really had trouble recalling the names of characters in the roles he portrayed. I guess it's a tribute to Bing that we tend often to think of him in the various parts. Certainly it's a credit to the writers for the close way in which his screen personna was consistent with the man and our expectations of him.

Artist Lyn Stocks managed to capture the man in a few skillful lines. Perhaps the most difficult problem for us in North America is figuring out the necessary monetary artithmentic that will convert our dollars into Australian or British currency.

(Sheldon recently completed a book 'Bing - a Man for all seasons', copies of which we hope to import for the Society. However, release details are a little hazy at present. We'll keep you informed. BM)

From Ken Twiss, The Bing Crosby Historical Society, Tacoma.

Our move to new premises was accomplished on January 25th. We are now in an eight story building in downtown Tacoma. It does have its bad points. Parking is a real problem So I now ride the bus. Also, the building is secured on Saturday and Sunday, so visitors to the 1984 Tribute will not be able to see our office.

Through it all though, it is real fun. It is indeed a challenge and over all a great experience. It will all be worthwhile if it leads to the ownership of the birthplace.

From Vern Vasey, Oregon (6320 S.W.Cherryhill Dve, Beaverton, O. 97005)

I collect cartoons and caricatures of Bing, along with his music, and am working on an article about same for Club Crosby's BINGANG. If any members have anything at all unusual, I would appreciate a photocopy. Will pay all costs.

From Tim Morgereth, Baltimore

In regards to my book - it originally was to be THE WHITEMAN ERA, a discography and overview of the years 1926 - 31, featuring Bing's recordings. My publisher liked it so much that he asked if it was possible to enlarge it so the current title is BING CROSBY DISCOGRAPHY AND FILMOGRAPHY. I wanted ROAD TO UTOPIA as the title, but me editor said that this is a serious reference work and not a nostalgic romp into the past. What it will consist of is a complete discography from '26 - '56 (78's only) in a cross between Sudhalter and Rust, a complete film section with photo section, and as much radio show data as I can compile by October.

The indexing will be cross-referenced listing recordings by number, matrix and song title. Personally, I'm tired of looking in a number of books to get all the info for one recording. So hence the book. It is designed for collectors, but will be of interest to all Bingers.

I still need data on KMH and Chesterfield. Everything else is coming along nicely. I'm also looking for some more B & W photos, promo items from the radio shows and advertisements from anything. Stuff that's a little out of the ordinary instead of run of the mill.

From Gene Douglas, Minneapolis

In 1929 (I was 9 years old), Paul Whiteman had the Camel Caravan programme on the radio, and my mother said to me, "You ought to start listening to this new singer, Bing Crosby". Rudy Vallee was on the billboards with 'Vagabond Lover' at the time. I saw that movie the next day and thought about what my mother had said.

Two years later I saw my first Mack Sennett short with Bing. I was nearly 12 and was badly smitten with hero worship - and nothing's changed to this day! I immediately started buying records; I guess that 'Just One More Chance' was one of the first. Even today when I see the old Mack Sennetts, I get that same old thrill.

When World War 2 started I wrote and told Bing I was joining Chi Corp Cadets and he sent me a really nice personal letter thanking me and wishing me luck.

I've enjoyed a lifetime of collecting and meeting some wonderful people, thanks to Bing.

(Do you have a recollection of hearing or even seeing Bing in the late 1920's or early 30's? We'd love to hear from you. BM)

Ron Holmes, Queenstown, Tasmania
advances the following theory as to why Bing was a very 'private' person: that very early on, he realized that privacy was essential to any person, especially in a 'public' industry such as entertainment, if that person was to survive.

In evidence, Ron encloses a cassette with a couple of extracts from the BBC radio series of Bing. One features actor Anthony Quinn telling how Bing was very kind and helpful when he (Quinn) was a young actor. Another features Bob Crosby who says that Bing was a very shy person who kept people at arm's length. The third features Rosemary Clooney who says that Bing was like this for "self-protection" and that the desire to protect what you keep for yourself is what saves your life as a performer.

Ron also sent an extract from the book "Hear Me Talkin' To Ya" by Nat Shapiro and Nat Hentoff in which they write about Bix Beiderbecke as follows: "As for what caused Bix to destroy himself, well in the era when he started, around Indiana, there was that thing with the hip bottles and the gin. Later, when he acquired a name for himself, he could get a bottle of whisky, any time of day or night. Now Bix enjoyed a drink but he was human too. Everybody likes privacy. Privacy enough to sleep and eat. But it was impossible for him to get any. There were always people in his room. They would knock at the door even at six a.m. and it was impossible for him because of the kind of person he was to insult anybody, to say 'get out of here'. In a sense, I think Bix was killed by his friends. But I think the term is being used loosely. Because they weren't his friends. They were the kind of people who liked to be able to say, "Last night I was up in Bix's room and oh, was he drunk. Gee, you should have seen his room." "

Ron then writes: Both Bing and Bix for a while had parallel careers. Both had similiar personalities (my guess) which was a tragedy for the jazz world, a tragedy that showed Bing what could lie ahead for himself. The astute Crosby mind realised that "there but for the grace of God go I". And from then on, Bing became two people - the public Crosby and the private Crosby.

Like I said, it's just a theory, but I feel a debt of gratitude is owed by Crosby fans to Bix Beiderbecke.

(What do you think of Ron's theory? Why not let us know. BM)

Bing Crosby is currently starred in Paramount's "The Emperor Waltz."

Can't both be Bing Crosby!

They *are* both Bing Crosby, young lady. Not two *different people*, of course- but *the* Bing Crosby dressed for two different occasions. And that's the point of the picture: to show how simple it is to be well-dressed—by wearing the *right clothes* at the *right time*. Bing Crosby is one of Hollywood's best-dressed men. On the left, he's dressed for travel, in the Stetson *Flagship* Briar. Or the right, he's ready for dinner in town, in the Stetson *Whipper*. Color: Sky Gray. You need neither fame nor fortune to be as well-dressed as Bing Crosby. Merely pick what you wear carefully, to suit the occasion. Then top it off with the right Stetson.

Leaving the airport, Bing wears...

The Stetson *Flagship*, $12.50

And meeting friends for dinner...

The Stetson *Whipper*, $10

Dress for the occasion with— STETSON HATS

More people wear Stetson Hats than any other brand. Stetson Hats are made only by John B. Stetson Company and its subsidiary companies in the United States and Canada.

Bing Crosby

July 6, 1973

Sir Colin Thornley
29 Queen Anne's Gate
London SW1H 9DH, England

Dear Sir Colin:

Sending you a little quote for use in your book, "The Pet Hate Book".

"I don't suppose I really have any pet hates, but I do have some rather intense dislikes.

"Being an avid golfer, angler and shooter, I guess I would have to say my most intense dislike is bad weather.

"It seems I'm always scanning the weather reports, watching the skies, trying to find out what the weather is going to be, and when it turns out bad, I'm furious.

"Of course, bad weather never did deter a real dedicated golfer, angler or shooter, but it does make it most unpleasant.

"I'm always able to extract some small satisfaction out of bad weather, with the realization that it's doing the farmers some good."

I do hope that the foregoing will be suitable.

Very best respects,

Bing Crosby

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LETTER TO KATHRYN CROSBY

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From Bernard Brusey

Dear Mrs Crosby, I have read your book which in my opinion seems to be more of a woman's book; for example, the many references to female attire, cooking, etc. I do not mean to be overcritical, in fact I enjoyed the book as I have been a Bing fan since 1933. He was part of my youth and my present and I am deeply interested in his life and songs. It appears to me that you tried to be all of three things, a Wife, a Nurse and an Actress at the same time, which to say the least, seemed to me to be taking a lot on. Reading your book I get the impression that Bing wanted the best of two life styles, that of a Married Man and that of a Bachelor. He comes across as a bit chauvinistic.

Admittedly he had to be away from home due to his career, but I think from the fact that he had a young family, he was inclined to overdo his absences. Gary writes that his father used to belt him with a strap; on the face of Gary's subsequent behaviour, one gets the impression that Bing didn't belt him hard enough. But that maybe an unfair comment as I cannot possibly know the true facts as one only reads the accound that Gary has stated. Providing one has the means, parents can give their children all the material comforts: a nice home, a good education, etc., but nothing is a substitute for love and the parents being with their children as much as is possible.

I was unfortunate to lose my mother when I was five years of age and my father was left with 5 children aged 1 - 11. Three of us were put into a Convent. My father was on the Somme and to lose his wife at 36 was a shattering blow, and although he neglected his responsibilities regarding his family, looking back now and knowing what he went through, I can understand and forgive him. I loved the man so much that I was broken up when he died one year after I came back from a German prison camp.

The point I'm making is that there is no substitute for parential love. My late brother, who later became a Q.C. always used to say that I regarded Bing as a father figure and maybe he was right.

Thank you for writing the book. I enjoyed it. I was given it by my daughter and it was one of the best Christmas presents I've ever had. Please continue with the final chapters.

(On the opposite page, you can see Kathryn's reply)

BING CROSBY NATIONAL
PRO-AM GOLF CHAMPIONSHIP
KATHRYN CROSBY
BOX 1789
BURLINGAME, CA 94010

February 17, 1984

Mr. B. T. Brusey
11 Myrniong Street
Burwood, Victoria
3125 Melbourne, Australia

Dear Mr. Brusey:

Thank you for your lovely letter about my book. I am so pleased that you enjoyed it.

Bing and I were very fortunate to have three splendid children. They are very hard working and I am proud of each of them.

I am pleased to hear that Bing and his songs gave you something of a father figure as you were growing up. Bing was a wonderful and gentle man.

Best wishes,

Kathryn Crosby

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THE BING WE NEVER KNEW

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by Ken Twiss, President of the Bing Crosby Historical Society.

By his works you shall know him...

Many generations knew Bing Crosby the crooner, entertainer, movie star and golfer. However, his accomplishments go far beyond the songs and sand traps. His contribution as an innovator, entrepreneur and a man of conscience is woven deep into the fabric of our culture

You pop in a cassette, push the button to record a message to send to a loved one or you slip in a tape to listen to a lecture on the bible or how to do aerobic exercises or the latest David Bowie hit... thank Bing Crosby because he was responsible for the birth of magnetic recording as an industry. If you're ever in Redwood City, California, just stop by the Ampex Museum of Magnetic Recording at the Ampex Corppration's headquarters; it tells the story.

Open the freezer, take out a can, add 3 parts water, stir and in 60 seconds the juice of the sunshine tree is on your table. Well, thank Bing again, because he supported and backed the research in a process known as flash freezing that revolutionized the food industry.

Celebrities gather every year with professionals on the freeway of Pebble Beach to play in the legendary Bing Crosby Pro-Am...but did you know this tournament was a pioneer in raising money for charity. Ever hear of the Crosby Youth Fund and how it benefits kids?

The list is long: Conservation and Ducks Unlimited, education and Gonzaga University, instrument recording and the 3M Company, the Norden bombsight and the defeat of the Nazis, women of the big band era and the Woman's History Research Centre and on and on.

Bing used his talent wisely and generously. He had great business savvy, the seeds of which were probably planted early in his life when he was involved in such ventures as being a paperboy for the Tacoma News Tribune. He could look at an idea and see how the benefits extended in many directions for the good of all. He had the same ability of insight as Franklin, Marconi, Bell, Edison, Ford, Carver, Curie or any person of inspired vision. Cont.../52

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COLLECTOR'S CORNER
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"BING AND SATCHMO"

This 1960 LP is the star of this issue's "Collector's Corner". Over the years, it has surfaced and re-surfaced with motonous regularity. This is the original MGM issue under the original title. This disc featured 11 of the 12 tracks recorded for it.

The remaining track, "Lazy River" was donated to a special fun-raising LP being prepared for the United Nations. For years, this was the only disc it appeared on. In the early 70's, when 'Music For Pleasure' re-released the LP, there were only ten tracks on it, "Lazy River" still being one of the missing two. ("Bye Bye Blues" was the other missing track.) Still, the record received a new photo and a new title "Bing and Louis".

In 1977, Capitol records acquired the rights to the master tapes and re-issued the record under the title "Bing Crosby - Louis Armstrong" with a striking new cover illustration. This issue also featured only ten tracks, but at last "Lazy River" was one of them. Those missing? "Let's sing like a Dixieland Band" and "Little Old Tune".

(Cont. from p.48)

Shortly after Bing passed on in 1977, the Bing Crosby Historical Society was founded to preserve his memory and highlight his works so future generations can learn about him and in doing so, maybe have sparked within themselves the same abilities of vision, creativity, entrepreneurship and generosity.

What better way to start than with the purchase of his birthplace to collect, house and catalogue the documents of his achievements. A goal of The Society is to purchase the old Crosby homestead at 1112 North 'J' Street, Tacoma, Washington, restore it to its 1900's decor and make it the Bing Crosby Historical Society's headquarters so fans as well as students world wide can have a central place to research facts or to find out where to find information on Bing.

Other projects of the Society include an annual tribute to Bing each spring in Tacoma. This year the tribute will be part of the city of Tacoma's centennial celebration.

The BCHS is involved in research as well as helping to co-ordinate a new book on Bing telling of his historical significance beyond being just an entertainer. A synopsis of some of the information has been mentioned in this letter. The book will also be the first project of a new communications medium, Video Books. Just as Bing was the first in the U.S. to use magnetic recording to produce radio shows, his spirit will be the first to explore this new video and print medium.

Developing fund raising capabilities is another Society goal, in order to provide scholarships to deserving students, not only in music but other creative endeavours as well, including entrepreneural studies.

Supporting other groups and organizaions which are involved in projects that are akin to the type of things Bing supported, is also the aim of the Bing Crosby Historical Society.

Your help is needed because in the past few years, publications have painted an unfair picture of Bing, giving him an image of being hollow. Bing's recent image has affected the Society's objectives. We feel that "By his works you shall know him" - the real Bing Crosby.

Help us preserve the true story for history by becoming a member of the Society, and contributing towards the purchase of his birthplace, symbol of the beginnings of greatness.

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Please send donations to the BCHS, PO Box 8013, Tacoma, Wash. 98408 USA.

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OF GENERAL INTEREST
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Other Crosby Societies: THE CROSBY COLLECTORS SOCIETY (£3.00 p.a.) John Bassett, c/o 'Bingville', 15 Oast Way, Rochford, Essex SS4 1RZ,UK.

CLUB CROSBY, Al Sutton, PO Box 8013, Sacramento, California 95818, USA.

INTERNATIONAL CROSBY CIRCLE, Reg Bristo, 7 Greenmeadow Close, Cwmbran NP 44 4PJ, England.

THE NEW BING CROSBY PHOTOCLUB, Frank Murphy, 32 Ferndale Ave, Wallsend Tyne and Wear, NE28 7NE, England. Frank writes that he now has a new overseas membership rate of only £4.00 including air mail service for your colour photos of Bing! Free photos and badges for new members!

When writing to any of the above, please include some international reply paid coupons, available from any post office.

Things for sale: THE VINTAGE RECORD SHOP, 159 Ormond Road, Elwood (tel 531 3938) has 78's and collector's LP's for sale. Open Mondays to Thursdays, 5.30 - 7.30 pm and Saturdays and Sundays from 12 - 5.

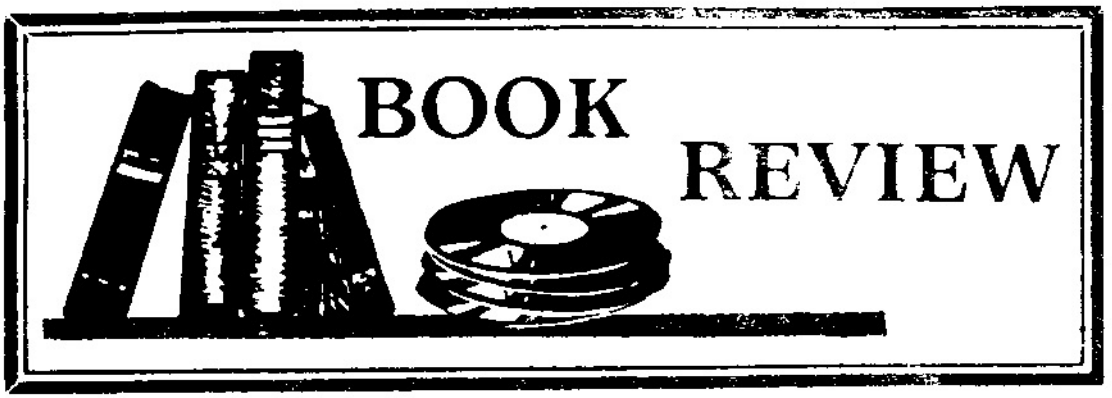
LP'S AT A DISCOUNT for club members, from The Bentleigh Sewing and Record Centre, 348 Centre Rd, Bentleigh (ph: 557 1050), and Cunningham's Hi fi & Records Centre, 80 Church St, Brighton (ph 592 2066).

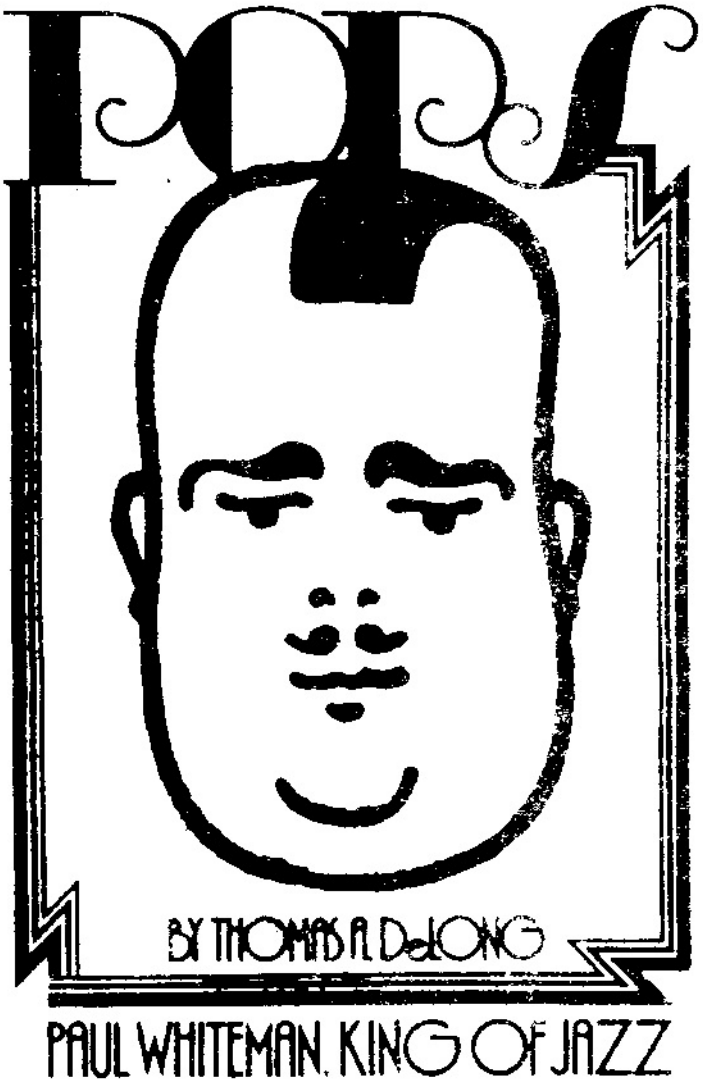
BING TAPES, hundreds to choose from, are available by mail from Arnold Baker, 48 Groomsport Rd, Bangon, Co Down, N. Ireland BT20 5LR.

BING DISCOGRAPHY, a must for all collectors, is available from John Joyce, (Bookbinders), Saltmeadows Rd, Gateshead, Tyne and Wear NE 8 AH 3, England.

Again, please remember to enclose reply coupons when writing for information. International postage rates are frightening these days and if the above people replied to each and every letter received (and paid for the postage themselves) they would soon be broke!

AMERICAN MEMBERS, PLEASE NOTE Richard Pearson has sensibly offered to take over the handling of orders for records issued in the USA and the UK. It makes absolutely no sense for us to order the discs to be shipped to Australia, and then send them back thousands of miles to the country of origin! Richard's address is on page 2.





"POPS"-PAUL WHITEMAN, KING OF JAZZ
by Thomas A. DeLong
New Century Publishers, Inc., 360 pages, hardbound, $17.95.

Frequently in history the title of King applied to some well intentioned monarch trying to establish something new, while having to keep track of a large unwieldly organization, and frequently not entirely understanding what was going on in the kingdom. By these criteria Paul Whiteman was well named the King of Jazz.

This should detract in no way from the countless con-

tributions this man made to American music in general, if not always to jazz in particular.

It was Paul Whiteman who, more than any other leader, launched the dance band style that provided the foundation of dance music for decades, in some respects to this very day.

He took the unruly scatterings of what then passed as dance music, ragtime, yes, even early jazz, and synthesized something very new for 1920, when he made the first trip to Camden, and the accoustical horns of Victor.

Thomas A. DeLong has recorded in fine detail one of the longest, most successful, and most influential careers in entertainment. Though the jazz content varied to a considerable degree over the 40 years of that career, it was always nearby, and quite frequently front and center.

If nothing else, the Whiteman orchestra provided well paid employment and nationwide exposure for men who were shaping the directions of jazz in the late 20's. Because of the Whiteman popularity in concert appearances and the deluges of Whiteman records, people everywhere heard Bix, Frankie Trumbauer, Joe Venuti, and the list goes on.

No one can estimate the positive influence this exposure had in making jazz familiar to people who'd had little encounter with it before, a universal exposure that would have been impossible without the tremendous popularity and acceptance of the Paul Whiteman Orchestra.

Perhaps not only the highlight, but a major turningpoint of the Whiteman years was reached that February afternoon in Aeolian Hall in 1924. With the tumultuous exultation of the audience on hearing George Gershwin play "Rhapsody in Blue," the orchestra began the concert leanings that were to prevail to the very end.

Mr. DeLong gives a good account of the many favorite American composers and their compositions who were influenced and encouraged, in many cases outright commissioned by Whiteman. Among these are Ferde Grofe's "Mississippi Suite"; and "Grand Canyon Suite"; Peter De Rose's "Deep Purple"; Matty Malneck's "Park Avenue Fantasy" and Louis Alter who gave us "Manhattan Serenade." All this after George Gershwin and the Rhapsody.

There is an illuminating passage about the Rhapsody's composition very revealing of the workings of musical creation. Had it not been for a suggestion by brother Ira, and some insistence by Ferde Grofe, the Rhapsody in Blue might have been very different indeed, and one wonders, what then might have happened during and after Aeolian Hall.

This new biography brings back, in interesting detail, the people and times of the Whiteman era.

There are splendid bits like those about George Gershwin, who is momentarily brought into sharp focus as a human being very much like the rest of us.

If you are looking for new discoveries about Bix, you'll have to seek elsewhere. Bix, though treated with great respect, is only described in the usual familiar ways.

Arrangers like Ferde Grofe, Roy Bargy, Bill Challis, and an unerring instinct for discovering great talent, giving the public what it wanted, and making money...all while having, usually, a magnificent time.

That musical trends began to pass him increasingly by until his orchestra became an anachronism off the concert stage is well delineated, as his career is traced on through his network radio and television years to its gradual end.

Most biographies include one section of interesting pictures. This book has FOUR of them, spaced through the pages to illustrate perhaps popular music's greatest career.

Although the Whiteman orchestra fell behind the avant garde in later years, it was an important front runner for a long time, perhaps a greater force for innovation than for which it was given credit. There's a venerable Columbia recording of "Tain't So Honey, Tain't So" with instrumental colors which sound amazingly fresh and new 50 years later.

Make room for a big book about a big musician.

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FROM OUT OF THE PAST
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EXTRACTS FROM "POPS - PAUL WHITEMAN, KING OF JAZZ"
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(This interesting new book, reviewed on the previous two pages, has many mentions of Bing, not all of them, it must be said, positive. It would seem that in later life, Bing was not all that friendly towards Whiteman, although the book offers no real explanation. The writer also perpetuates a commonly heard myth that Bing had absolutely nothing to do with either of his partners after the Rhythm Boys split up. You only have to look at any of Bing's movies from the middle 30's to the early 40's to see that Harry Barris has a small but featured role. The parts he plays could have been filled by anyone, and I find it hard to believe that he did not land these roles because of Bing's influence.

Anyway, these are small points. The book is interesting reading and is the first major book that I have ever seen on Whiteman.

The following extracts cover some of the Crosby mentions in the book.

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(The Whiteman band was signed, in 1927, to appear in the Broadway show 'Lucky'. The show only lasted 9 weeks, but did give Bing and Al Rinker valuable exposure.)

One of the few bright moments in 'Lucky' came about because Paul insisted on giving Crosby and Rinker a feature spot. Because no number in the score seemed suitable for the duo, he picked up a tin pan alley tune, "Sam the Old Accordian Man'," and added his band's Mario Perry on the accordian. The number went over big at a time when Paul was wondering what to do with the two musicians from Spokane

Variety gave the show a rave review. Many members of the band came in for individual praise. The write-up lauded Paul's showmanship in putting together a miniature road show. "He knows what is wanted and goes after it with assurance. He has the smartest, quickest and snappiest routine of his career." The paper particularly liked the first broadway appearance of Crosby and Rinker, calling them a "smart two-man piano act, who sing pop ditties differently. After Whiteman

gets through grooming the boys, they'll be in the money." Audiences at the Paramount Theatre thought otherwise. After an enthusiastic acceptance by Chicago theatregoers and a rave review notice, Crosby and Rinker were dumbfounded. "They laid dinosaur eggs," Paul remarked of their flop. (The book then goes on to tell the oft-told tale of how Whiteman then brought in Harry Barris who smartened the act up, re-named them 'The Rhythm Boys', and how the group never looked back. Well, almost. By 1928, the boys were having problems of a different kind.)

Paul was once more in a quandry about Crosby, Rinker and Barris. Paul had given them dozens of bits of vocal work on recordings and Crosby had received solo work on many more. The money came in fast. For bachelors Bing and Al the income made chasing bootleggers, golf balls, and girls that much easier. More and more of their time, energy and talent was spent in directions other than music. Paul, at least, felt that they could do better, and they rarely bothered to freshen up their act with new numbers. Years later, asked whether Bing was hard to handle, Paul said of his prodigal crooner, "No, he was never hard to handle. But sometimes he was hard to find." This period marked the beginning of a love-hate relationship that lasted for thirty years.

(The book also covers the Paul Whiteman OldGold Radio broadcasts in the late 20's in which Bing was a regular vocalist.)

The Old Gold-Paul Whiteman Hour bowed on February 5, 1929, from New York. CBS announcer-sportscaster Ted Husing introduced the orchestra, which played thirteen numbers, including several already available on Columbia records.

Old Gold also wanted the Rhythm Boys on every program, especially Bing Crosby. Masculine voices - baritones - were rapidly becoming the vogue on popular tunes. Tenors or falsettos, the sponsor believed had had their day. Paul sent an SOS to the trio to return to the fold. The boys agreed - at double their present weekly salary of $450.

Bing immediately pleased Old Gold. Week after week he sang arrangements of such current songs as "I'll Get By", "Louise", "I Kiss Your Hand Madame" and "Sweet Georgia Brown." The program now had a rival to rapidly rising crooners Rudy Vallee and Will Osborne, and the producers felt confident that they were reaching

the newest market for cigarettes: the flappers and collegians of 1929. (The band also broadcast regularly during the filming of "King of Jazz") Whilst filming of King of Jazz progressed, Paul and the band still did the weekly Old Gold Show. Such Hollywood stars as Blanche Sweet, Harry Richman, Richard Arlen, Jack Oakie, Lillian Roth, Lew Cody and June Clyde were guests on the show. Charles King, star of MGM's Broadway Melody, was scheduled to sing a solo; as he stood up at the mike, Joe Venuti opened his violin case and pulled out an old shotgun and drew a bead on King. The band started to laugh, wondering if Joe would be crazy enough to shoot. Paul exploded and lost control of the band in the uproar going out "live" from coast to coast. "Undoubtedly, Venuti helped age Whiteman," Bing wrote of the jazz violinist.

(In the mid-30's, Paul Whiteman's radio sponsor was Kraft. However, they were looking for a variety show with music, not the musical variety programme presented by Paul.)

On December 5, 1935, Kraft announced that Bing Crosby would be the new star of the Music Hall. For four weeks, the producers featured both Whiteman and his orchestra from New York and Bing with Jimmy Dorsey's band from Hollywood. Paul was pleased that two of his alumni were taking over the series. In fact, Bing had telephoned Paul to make sure that Whiteman did not mind his taking over the series. Then, in a not uncommon radio switch, Bing's earlier sponsor, Woodbury Soap and Cosmetics, asked Whiteman to take over the former Rhythm Boys program. Apparently both performers got what they wanted - different shows more to their liking, new sponsors, and more money.

(In 1943, Whiteman began a Sunday evening series "Paul Whiteman Presents". Many well known artists were his guests, including the following.)

Paul's most remarkable coup was to persuade Bing Crosby to join the reunion of the Rhythm Boys on the Fourth of July broadcast. Bing agreed as a favour to Pops; afterwards he remarked, "Now were even". Apparently it took a lot of nerve for him to face Al Rinker and Harry Barris again, let alone sing with them. Both were bitter at having been ignored by their former partner. Al had not seen Bing since

the trio broke up in the early 1930's; Barris had seen him only once, some eleven years earlier. (Quite untrue, as we mentioned at the start! BM) Nevertheless, the trio performed effortlessly and with little rehersal on the hit they had performed back in 1927, "Mississippi Mud". The broadcast also offered a satirical sketch on their first audition with Paul. Dinah Shore played Paul's secretary in the skit, which tossed in some current jokes about Bing's race horses. Thirteen years later, when Paul commemorated his fiftieth year in show business, the segments were reproduced in a multidisc anniversary record album, chiefly because Bing was no longer interested. The Rhymth Boys never sang together again.

(Whiteman was an early star of television. His show "TV Teen Club" auditioned hundreds of young hopefuls in the late 40's and early 50's)

Three teenage brothers bearing the name Crosby, however, never made the auditions. Pops heard Lindsay, Philip, and Dennis Crosby at a small club near New Hope one summer. After they performed, the trio came to his table to discuss the act's potential. Though Paul was not impressed by their work, he politely offered suggestions to improve their routine. When it came time to pick up the check, one of the Crosby lads reached for it, saying, "It's about time a Crosby paid for a drink. You picked up enough bills for my old man."

Paul grabbed the check from his hand. "Let me tell you something, kid. If you weren't Bing Crosby's son, you couldn't sweep the floors in this place." With that, Pops got up and walked out.

(Paul Whiteman died on December 29th, 1967. Although he was one of the most important, if not the most important bandleader of his day, it's a little sad that his music is not better remembered today. I guess that unlike say, Glenn Miller, his orchestra's never had a very distinctive Whiteman 'sound'. Or if they did, it was a sound copied by so many other bands over the years that it became a universal sound. You probably have to go back to the early 20's and compare the Whiteman group with what was currently available, to get a proper perspective. But one thing is sure, Whiteman was a pioneer, and a major one, in making popular music appealing to a mass audience.)

And there we'll leave this newsletter. I hope you found something of interest within its pages. Until next time,

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BACK PAGE
SPECIAL
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